ISLAHI KHUTBAAT

DISCOURSES ON ISLAMIC WAY OF LIFE

Part 8

By
Justice Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani

DARUL-ISHAAT
KARACHI-1, PAKISTAN.

DISCOURSESON ISLAMIC WAY OF LIFE

VOL.VIII

By

Justice Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani

Translated By

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DARUL ISHA'AT

URDU BAZAR KARACHI-1
PAKISTAN (021) 2631861

Vol. VIII

Includes

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The English version of the Islahi Khutbat, has been published by Darul Isha'at Pakistan. This is solely because of the Favours of Allah on us and the prayers of our mentors.

This is the translation of the reformative speeches of Mufti Justice Mawlana Muhammad Taqi Usmani may Allah prolong his benefits over us. He has been given these lectures for about ten years every week at the Bait ul Mukarram Masjid, Karachi. Those who attend these lectures gain much knowledge theoretically and practically. I, too, attend these lectures and have been deriving much advantage. These lectures are being recorded on audio cassettes and books are published subsequently. These cassettes and books cater to those who understand the Urdu language.

We at Darul Isha'at desired that an increased number of people should benefit from these lectures. Allah helped us get these books translated into English and publish them and He also provided us the necessary means. *Al-Hamdu-lil-laah,* after six years of continuous effort a

complete set of these books is available to the readers. Let our readers remember that these books have been translated from oral lectures of the honourable Mufti Justice Mawlana Muhammad Taqi Usmani and not from his writings.

They may, therefore, find in them the style of the spoken words that the translator may have retained here and there.

We have endeavoured to match the get up of the books with their invaluable content and have paid due care in the use of paper, printing and binding. We hope that this set of books will be very useful to our readers in Europe and the United States. They will gain beneficial knowledge from these books and be prompted to put their knowledge into practice.

Insha Allah they will find a great change in their everyday life.

We have published many books in English and many more are under preparation. Do write to us for a full list of these books.

Finally, I request my readers to remember me in their prayers as also my parents and family members. May Allah reward them.

KHALIL ASHRAF USMANI
S/O MOHAMMAD RAZI USMANI

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FOREWORD

To The English Edition by
Justice Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

On the advice of some of my elders I hold a weekly meeting in Jamia Masjid AlBaitul Mukaram attended by a large number of Muslim brothers and sisters. Rather than giving a formal lecture, my basic purpose intended to be achieved through these meetings is that we get together for some time to review our ways of life in the light of Islamic teachings and to deliberate what is going to happen to us after we leave this mundane world. When the Muslims having true Islamic orientation sit together for this purpose, each one of them benefit from the other to create a genuine concern about our coming life which is the real and eternal life as compared to the present one which may come to an end any time.

I this mutual meeting which is meant for self-correction I normally read a book of Hadith and explain it to the audience in the light of what I have learned from my elders with special reference to the current attitude prevailing in our society and touching upon the relevant practical issues, social evils and the major faults found in our practical life. My friend Maulana Abdulla Memon who regularly attended these meetings usually prepares the audio cassettes of these addresses which are widely circulated in the country and abroad. He has also transcribed some of these audio cassettes in an abridged form and after their compilation he has published them in separate

volumes under the title of "Islahi Khutbaat". Nine volumes of this compilations have already come out in Urdu by the grace of Allah which were widely circulated, read and benefited from.

Since long some of my friends were suggesting that these addresses be rendered into English as well so that they may be useful for the English readership. I was reluctant to act upon the suggestion because, as told earlier, these addresses were not formal lectures on a particular subject. They were in fact discussions, on different aspects of our lives, undertaken with frankness rather than formalism. They some time lack the sequence usually expected from a well considered writing. Therefore, I do not know how far their translation will be as meaningful and effective as it was proved to be in the original Urdu language. However, my nephew, Mr. Khalil Ashraf Usmani, the proprietor of Darul Ishaat, requested Mr. Iqbal Ansari and Mr. Rafiq Abdur Rehman to translate these Khutbaat into English. Both of these gentlemen undertook the task and the outcome of their noble effort is appearing before the readers. I had advised them not to be too strict in literal translation and to render the basic idea in their own style. I had no opportunity to go through the manuscript of their translation but had an occasion to have a cursory look on some passages. To the best of my assessment the translation I have seen is correct and conveying. I hope that it will help readers to understand the basic theme of these Khutbaat. May Allah grant the best reward to the translators and publisher of this book and make it beneficial for the readers. I would again remind the readers that it is not a book properly authored by me. It is the compilation of my extempore discussions therefore, I extend my apology if some readers find the sequence of thoughts somehow disturbed in some places. However, the readers should concentrate on the message given and not on the style adopted.

Muhammad Taqi Usmani

FOREWORD

To The Urdu Edition by
Justice Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

الحمد لله وكفى وسلام على عباده الذين اصطفى

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

All Praise belongs to Allah Who is Sufficient. And, peace be on His chosen servant.

For many years now, I have been delivering talks on religious subjects in compliance with the advice of my elders every Friday after 'Asr prayer.

People of different walks of life attend these meetings, and there are women too. By the Grace of Allah, I derive much benefit myself from these talks and my listeners too feel a sense of advantage. May Allah cause the series of talks a means of reformation for all of us. *Aameen*!

My close colleague, Maulana Abdullah Memon, has been recording these talks for some time and distributing the cassettes. I have been told by my friends that these cassettes have been much beneficial to the general body of Muslims.

The number of cassettes has now exceeded two hundred and fifty. Maulana Abdullah Memon has reduced some of these cassettes to writing and brought them out in the form of small booklets which are now compiled together in book-form under the name of Islahi Khutbaat (Discourses on Islamic Way of life)

I have revised some of the speeches and the Maulana has done a very useful work by annotating quotations of the

Ahadith in my speeches with proper references to their source. This work has proved very useful.

In reading this book, my readers must remember that it is not a formal composition but a collection of speeches made at different times penned down from recording. Therefore, they will sense the style of an oral dialogue in these articles. The benefit that accrues to any Muslim from these articles is merely a blessing of Allah for which he must be thankful to Him. But, if there is a slip in these articles or something superfluous, then that is a lapse on my part. I must say, however, that my aim in delivering these talks was not simply to speak out but-before everything else- I had my reformation in mind, and then that my listeners may be drawn towards their own reformation.

Do not let the written word please you
Or the working of fate worry you!
I have by your memory alone
What of the text and what of its meaning

May Allah through His Grace and Favour let these writings be a means of our reformation, and a treasure for the Hereafter. May He reward well the compiler and publisher of these articles. *Aameen.*

Muhammad Taqi Usmani.
12 Rabi-ul- Awwal 1414 A.H

Series : 71

THE PRINCIPLES OF PREACHING AND CALLING TO ISLAM

DARUL ISHAAT URDU BAZAR KARACHI

Venue	:	Jame 'Masjid Baitul Mukarram Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Karachi.
Date	:	15th November, 1991

THE PRINCIPLES OF PREACHING AND CALLING TO ISLAM

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ
بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن
يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان
سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه
وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطن الرجيم بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

وَالْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ وَالْمُؤْمِنٰتُ بَعْضُهُمْ اَوْلِيَآءُ بَعْضٍ م يَأْمُرُوْنَ بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ
وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُقِيْمُوْنَ الصَّلٰوةَ وَيُؤْتُوْنَ الزَّكٰوةَ وَيُطِيْعُوْنَ اللهَ
وَرَسُوْلَهٗ ط اُولٰٓـئِكَ سَيَرْحَمُهُمُ اللهُ ط اِنَّ اللهَ عَزِيْزٌ حَكِيْمٌ (سورة التوبة ٧١)

Praise belongs to Allah. We praise Him and ask

Him for help, and we seek His forgiveness. We believe in Him and place our trust in Him. And, we seek refuge in Him from the mischief of our base self and from our evil deeds. He whom Allah guides none can mislead and he whom He leaves to stray none can guide. We bear witness that there is no god except Allah, the One who has no partner and we bear witness that sayyidina Muhammad ﷺ is His Servant and Messenger, may blessings of Allah be on him, his family and companions, and may He bestow favours and peace a complete peace.

I seek the protection of Allah from the cursed devil. In the Name of Allah, the Compassionat, the Merciful.

And the believing men and the believing women are friends of one another. They enjoin the right and forbid the wrong, and they establish the *Salah*, and pay the *Zakah*, and they obey Allah and His Messenger. Those - Allah shall have mercy upon them. Surely Allah is Mighty, Wise. (at-Tawbah. 9:71)

I believe in Allah who has spoken the turth and He is our Great Protector. And, His Messenger and noble Prophet has spoken the truth, too. And we bear witness to that, and we are thankful. Praise belongs to Allah Lord of the worlds.

Stages enjoining the Right and forbidding the Wrong

This verse of the Qur'an deals with 'enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong.' In describing the quality of His pious slaves, Allah says that they bid other

people to do is good and forbid them to do what is bad or evil. The verb in the verse امر (*amastetra*) means 'to command', 'to bid' while the noun (*ma'ruf*) means 'the right', 'piety', 'good'. The verb نهی (*nahi*) means 'to forbid' and the noun منکر (*munkar*) means 'evil'. The jurists contend that just as it is فرض (*obligatory*) on every Muslim to observe *Fast* and offer *Salat*, so also it is فرض (obligatory) to stop anyone who does something evil according to his ability telling him that what he does is sinful. Generally, people know that 'to enjoin right and forbid evil' is obligatory but they do not know when it is فرض(*obligatory*) and when it is not. The result is that many people are neglectful of this duty. Such a man sees his wife, children and friends indulge in unlawful activities but he does not feel inclined to forbid them from doing evil; he observes them defer their duties but he does not bid them to fulfil their obligations. On the other hand, there are some people who interpret this verse 'to the letter' and occupy themselves from morning to evening in baring other people from different activities. In this way, people go to the extreme in observing this verse because they have not understood it well. Therefore, let us go through the explanation of this verse.

Two approaches in Preaching and Calling Individually and Collectively

The first thing that we must know is that there are two ways in which anyone may preach and call others to Islam. (i) The individual way is to convey the message to an individual. For instance, if anyone sees another person doing an evil deed or disregarding an obligation then asking him to give up the evil or meet his obligation is the individual preaching and calling 'to Islam'.

(ii) The 'Cllective preaching and calling to Islam." This is achieved when anyone delivers a sermon to a group of people. or teaches them. or intends to visit other people and tell them about religion with no other purpose in mind. This last is also done by the members of the *Tablighi Jama'at* when they visit other people's homes and offices to convey to them religious ideas. This is 'collective propagation'. The rules for both these approaches differ as also their etiquettes.

The Collective method is also a *Fard Kifayah*

The 'collective propagation' is not an individual duty (*fard 'ayn*) but it is a *fard kifayah* (collective duty). Thus, it is not incumbent on every Muslim to go to other people and deliver a sermon, or to visit them and preach bacause this is a *fard kifayah* which means that if a few people discharge that duty the remaining are absolved of it, but, if no one does it then all the people are being sinful. Take the funeral prayer. It is not the responsibility of every individual to join it; if he does, he will be rewarded but if he does not then he will not be a sinner provided some people are offering it. If no one offers it then every Muslim there will have committed a sin. This is known as *fard kifayah* (a collective obligation). In the same manner the collective preaching and calling to Islam ' is a *fard kifayah*.

Individual Propagation is also An Individual Obligation

The 'individual' preaching and calling to Islam ' is what anyone does when he sees another person do something wrong or overlooks a duty: to the best of his

ability he stops that person from doing wrong, or makes him fulfil his obligation. It is not a *fard kifayah* but it is a *fard 'ayn*. It implies that one does not leave it for other people to do it, or imagine that a preacher or a member of the *Tablighi Jama'at* will do it. It is an obligatuion on every individual Muslim that must perform and is known as *fard 'ayn*.

To Enjoin Right and Forbid Wrong Is *Fard 'Ayn*

Allah has described the pious people in many verses of the Qur'an. He says يامرون بالمعروف وينهون عن المنكر {They bid what is right and forbid what is wrong}. Thus this behaviour is a duty on every individual. Today, we do not even know that it is an obligation. We see our children, family members, acquaintances do wrong but we do not care to warn them or feel within ourselves that we must reproach them, this is a continuous dereliction of duty, a perpetual negligence in fulfilling an obligation. Just as a Muslim is obliged to observe *Salat* five times a day, *Fast* in the month of Ramadan, pay *zakah* and perform *Hajj*, so too is his duty to enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong. We must.. therefore, realise its significance before we proceed. If anyone is pious all his life, never missing a *Salat* or a *Fast* and pays *zakah* regularly and performs *Hajj* and he never commits a grave sin at any time yet he has omitted to enjoin the right and forbid the wrong and never thought of keeping other people away from doing evil then, in spite of his personal piety, he will be called to account in the Hereafter. He will have to explain what efforts he undertook to stop the evil being committed before his eyes. Therefore, it is not enough to reform oneself but it is necessary to worry about correcting other people.

When does 'Bidding the Right and forbidding the Wrong' become Obligatory?

We must remember that there are two kinds of worship: the *fard* or *wajib* (absolute obligatory or obligatory) and *Sunnah* or *Mustahab* (the practice of the Prophet ﷺ. or the desireable behaviour). The former include: regular *Salat*. *Fasting*, *Zakah*, *Hajj* and so on. The latter include: using the *Siwaak*, reciting the *Bismillah* before eating, drinking water in three sips, and so on, and include all the practices of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. As for the evil deeds, they are also of two types; the unlawful, sinful acts absolutely disallowed, and those though not unlawful yet violate the *Sunnah* are *undesireable*. If anyone omits the *fard* or *wajib*, or commits the unlawful, it is *fard ʿayn* to 'bid the right and forbid the wrong', If anyone drinks wine, or involves himself in any illicit act, or backbites, or tells lies, it is obligatory to 'forbid the wrong' and stop him doing so. If anyone omits regular *Salat*, or does not pay *zakah*, or skips *Fasting* in Ramadan then it is obligatory to ask him to do his duty.

When is it not *Fard* to Forbid the wrong

In discharging the foregoing duty, it is a condition that the perpetrator is likely to pay heed to the person who discharges his duty and there is no risk to the latter. Thus, if one is confident that the perpetrator will not pay attention but make fun of *Shariʿah* and belittle it then one is absolved of the duty to forbid him. We must remember that by insulting *Shariʿah* the person commits an act of disbelief because to belittle a command of *Shariʿah* is not only sinful but it draws the person outside the fold of Islam and makes him an unbeliever. Therefore, when there is likelihood of the doer of an evil act reacting to an advice

of a preacher and making fun of *Shari'ah* or its commands then it is no more a duty to forbid him from doing anything sinful. However, one must remove oneself from there and pray for the sinful person: "O Allah! This slave of yours is sick, do cure him of his ailment by your mercy."

Forbidding One Who Sins

Let us examine the case of a person who is deeply involved in a sinful act and derives full pleasure out of it. At that time, there is no possibility whatsoever of that person listening to advice and stopping himself from the sinful act. If anyone approaches him at that time when he is deriving peak pleasure and, without assessing the situation, commends to him the right way then that person will make fun of the command of *Shari'ah* and thus do a thing of disbelief. The responsibility of this man's conduct rests on the 'bidder of the right conduct'. We have seen, therefore, that it is dangerous and disadvantageous to forbid a sinner when he is deeply involved in the sin. The correct way is to explain to him later on what he did was not proper.

When the chances are equal

When the possibilities of the sinner paying heed and refusing to listen are equal then it is necessary to convey to him the message. The chances are that Allah will inspire him to listen to the preacher and he may thus reform. If that happens then every pious deed that he does thereafter will earn a reward for the preacher too.

When there is possibility of harm befalling the Preacher

There is also the possibility that the person who 'bids the right or forbids the wrong' might be harmed by the sinner when he is asked to desist but he many not comment on *Shari'ah*. In such cases, too, it is proper not to preach to the sinner and the 'bidding and forbidding' is not *fard*. However, it is better to forbid him from doing wrong because although the preacher may risk himself, he will, nevertheless, convey the Truth. He may endure the annoyance and do the preferable thing. We must remember the foregoing three possibilities. They are: when it is likely that advice and counsel will backfire and the person advised may speak against the commands of *Shari'ah*, the commended must not be bid and the wrong must not be forbidden but one must maintain silence. When there are equal possibilities of favourable and unfavourable response from the perpetrator of sin, it is necessary to preach him. The third possibility is that the perpetrator of sin may not deride *Shari'ah* but may harm the advisor; in this case although it is not necessary to preach to him yet it is better to endure the hardship and tell him 'to do the right and shun the wrong'. This is the gist of the courses open to the preacher which he must remember.

When advising anyone the intention must be Sincere

The person who conveys the message of *Shari'ah* must be sincere in his intention. If he imagines himself as a reformer, religious-minded and God-fearing and his subject as a sinner and misled whom he is reforming then his good words will benefit neither the person to whom they are

addressed nor their speaker. This is because a faulty intention grows in the speaker arrogance and his deed no longer gains approval in the sight of Allah Thus his deed is worthless and of no avail and his effort wasted. The listener too will not be impressed by his words. Therefore, it is imperative that the caller to good deeds must be sincere in his intention.

The Style of delivery must be proper

In the same way, when the message of *Shari'ah* is conveyed to someone the speaker must adopt a correct approach. He must speak in a polite, loving manner wishing him well so that the person who is addressed does not feel much hurt and disgraced. My respected father. Maulana Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه often quoted Allama Shabbir Ahmad Uthmani رحمة الله عليه as saying frequently, "When the Truth is spoken in a true way with a true intention it will never cause harm." So, whenever there is a conflict after someone says something True, one of the three things will be found surely: the speaker may not have spoken the truth or his intention may have been faulty or he may have hoped to disgrace his listener. Such a shortcoming would deprive the words of their power to influence. If, on the other hand, the words were true and the speaker was sincere, then the approach may have been faulty. The words may have been spoken roughly as though the addressee was being beaten with a stick. The True words are not a stick that one picks up and hits another with but it is a well-wishing affair that should be done politely. When the well-wishing factor is missing then the True word will also cause harm.

The Preacher must be Soft-Spoken

My respected father, Maulana Mufti Muhammad Shafi' رحمة الله عليه often remarked that when Allah directed Sayyidina Musa and Aaron (Harun) عليهما السلام to preach to Fir'aun, (Pharoah) He asked them.

فَقُوْلَا لَهٗ قَوْلاً لَّيِّنًا لَّعَلَّهٗ يَتَذَكَّرُ اَوْ يَخْشٰى (سورة طه: ٤٤)

But speak to him mildly; Perchance he may take warning or fear (Allah). (20:44)

But, who was this Fir'aun? Was he not who said that he had divine powers? He said:

اَنَا رَبُّكُمُ الْاَعْلٰى (النازعات: ٢٤)

"I am your Lord, Most high."

Thus, he was the worst of the disbelievers.

My father would say after narrating this event that there cannot be a reformer more capable than Sayyidina Musa عليه السلام in our age nor can there be anyone more misled than the Pharaoh no matter how sinful he may be. The Pharoah laid claim on divinity. In spite of that the two Prophets, Sayyidina Musa and Haarun عليهما السلام were instructed that they should speak to him politely, not in a harsh tone. This principle we have to follow upto the Day of Resurrection and we should be soft when speaking about religious matters.

The Method Of The Holy Prophet ﷺ

The Holy Prophet ﷺ was sitting in Masjid Nabvi once with the Companions رضی الله عنهم when a villager entered it. He offered his *Salat* hurriedly and then made a very suprising supplication.

اَللّٰهُمَّ ارْحَمْنِيْ وَ مُحَمَّدًا وَلَا تَرْحَمْ مَعَنَا اَحَدًا

"O Allah, have mercy on me and Muhammad ﷺ and do not show mercy to anyone else

besides us."

The Holy Prophet ﷺ heard him and said, "You have restricted the mercy of Allah very much and limited it to two people only, no more! But, the mercy of Allah is large and all-encompassing." After a while, this villager sat down in the courtyard of the mosque and passed his urine. On seeing him the Companions رضى الله عنهم hurried towards him and were on the point of scolding him and repriminding him when the Holy Prophet ﷺ said : لا تزرموه {Do not interrupt him. Leave him alone}.(*Sahih Muslim*. Book of Taharah Chapter Ghusl).

اِنَّمَابُعِثْتُمْ مُيَسِّرِيْنَ وَلَمْ تُبْعَثُوْا مُعَسِّرِيْنَ

"You are sent as well-wisher for the people, to make things easy for them and not to create difficulties in their way."

He then asked them to throw water over it and clean the mosque. He then called the villager to him and explained to him that the mosque was the House of Allah and was not meant for what he did, so "do not do it again."

The Method of Preaching By the Prophets عليهم السلام.

If someone behaved in this way in our presence and defiled a mosque, we might perhaps teach him the lesson of his life. The Holy Prophet ﷺ., however, observed that the man was unacquainted with the etiquette of the Mosque and whatever he did, he did out of lack of knowledge. So, instead of reprimanding him, he gently explained to him what the proper way was. This was the way of teaching with all the Prophets عليهم السلام. If any one abused them they never retaliated. The Holy Qur'an has reproduced the words of the idolators, they used against Prophets عليهم السلام

اِنَّا لَنَرٰكَ فِيْ سَفَاهَةٍ وَاِنَّا لَنَظُنُّكَ مِنَ الْكٰذِبِيْنَ (الاعراف:٦٦)

We see you in folly, and surely, we think you to be one of the liars.(al-A'raf. 7:66)

If anyone were to speak in this manner to a religious scholar today, or to a sermoniser, he would retaliate and abuse him in similar words. But, the Prophets عليهم السلام said.

يٰقَوْمِ لَيْسَ بِيْ سَفَاهَةٌ وَّلٰكِنِّي رَسُوْلٌ مِّنْ رَّبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ

"O my people, there is no folly in me; but I am a Messenger from the Lord of the worlds." (Al A'raf.7:67)

How gentle are the words! In another case, people said to their Messenger:

اِنَّا لَنَرٰكَ فِيْ ضَلَالٍ مُّبِيْنٍ (الاعراف:٦٠)

Surely we see you in manifest error. (al- A'raf. 7:60)

But, their Messenger answered that he was not in error but that he was a Messenger from the Lord of the worlds. That was their manner of teaching and reforming. But, we find that our preaching does not bear fruit which is because of one of these things: We do not convey the Truth, our method is not True or our intention is not True. That is why there is so much evil around.

An Incident in the Life of Shah Isma'il رحمة الله عليه

Shah Isma'il Shaheed رحمة الله عليه is one of those eminent pious men who have proved this behaviour to be correct. He was delivering a sermon in the Jami Masjid of Delhi when one of the audience got up and asked him to answer his question. The Maulana asked him to put the question. He said, "I have heard that you are a bastard? (We seek refuge in Allah). He said it when the sermon was being delivered before a multitude and to a man who was not only a religious scholar of high calibre but also a royal prince! One like me might have turned red in anger at that very moment

and might have punished the daring interrupter. And if one like me would not do so, the supporters would surely have taught him a lesson for saying such a thing about their Shaikh. But, Maualana Shah Isma'il Shaheed رحمة الله عليه said in answer to the man, "Brother, you have a wrong information. The witnesses to the marriage of my mother are yet present in Delhi." It was thus that he answered the man and did not make an issue out of it.

How May One Create Effective Words:-

When a person speaks solely for Allah and suppresses his own desires so that his listeners too realise that he speaks for the cause of Allah and has no axe to grind for himself then what he says produces the desired result. As for Maulana Shah Isma'il Shaheed رحمة الله عليه, thousands of people repented to Allah at his hands in each of his sermons. In comparison, we may say for ourselves that we have, in the first instance, given up the task of propagation of Islam and if any of us does make an attempt his approach incites his listeners. There is, therefore, no productive result. To overcome the drawback we must remember three things and observe them. We must convey the Truth with a sound intention and when we do it we will not suffer any damage but we will derive much benefit.

Who Is Authorised To Make The 'Collective Call'

The second way to preach and call to Islam is the collective approach. In this method, the preacher gathers people and delivers a sermon or a speech, or gives them advice. This is known as collective preaching and calling to Islam. 'The collective call' is not *fard a'yn*. It is *fard kifayah* and if some people undertake it, the others are absolved of

it, but everyone is not authorised to do it. The preacher must have certain qualifications and if a person is not qualified enough then he may not undertake the work. A person who is not likely to utter anything wrong during his sermon may be permitted to sermonise. This task of 'preaching and calling' is a very delicate affair. When a speaker observes a lot of people listening to him, he gets it into his head that he is a great scholar and he misleads his listeners into believing him as a great scholar. They imagine he is a very pious person. When the listeners are cheated, he himself goes alongwith and considers that he is a great man. "So many people! They all call me a scholar, a righteous and pious man. There must be something to it. They cannot be mad, all of them." This is how one may trap oneself into a trial.

Therefore, everyone must not attempt to deliver a speech or sermon. Of course, if a teacher or an elder ushers a pupil forward then he may begin under the elder's patronage and seek Allah's help who will potect him from the trial.

To Impart Lessons From The Qur'an & *Hadith*

We have commented on delivering the sermon and the speech which is comparatively easier than giving lessons in the Qur'an and *Hadith*. Now-a-days,about every other person takes it upon himself to impart lessons from the Qur'an and *Hadith*. But the truth is that the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said about the Noble Qur'an.

من قال فی القران بغیر علم فلیتبوأ مقعده من النار

"If anyone says anything by way of interpreting the Qur'an without having the knowledge then he must know that his destination is Hell".

Another *Hadith* tells us:

من قال في كتاب الله عزوجل برأيه فاصاب فقد اخطأ (ابوداؤد، كتاب العلم، باب الكلام في كتاب الله بغير علم)

"If anyone gives his personal opinion in the Book of Allah, the Great, and even if his opinion is correct then, he has erred (in giving it)". (*Abu Dawood*, Book of Knowledge)

What a serious warning the Prophet ﷺ has given! In spite of that we see people learning something from the books then imagining themselves learned men and scholars. They then consider themselves capable of imparting lessons in Qur'an although this department like the lessons in *Hadith*, is one that eminent Ulama hesitate to undertake. How then may we expect an ordinary man to give the lessons and interpret the Qur'an?.

The Respected Mufti Muhammad Shafi and the Exegeses of the Qur'an

My respected father, Maulana Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه spent seventy or seventy-five years of his life in studying and teaching religion. It was in the final years of his life that he compiled the exegeses of the Noble Qur'an, the Ma'riful Qur'an. He told me often that he did not consider himself capable of undertaking this work. He said, "But, I have composed the exegeses of Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanavi into simple language." All his life, he said, "Eminent Ulama stayed away from expounding on the verses of the Qur'an."

Imam Muslim on *Hadith*

Imam Muslim رحمة الله عليه has collected a number of authentic *Ahadith* and compiled them together as *Sahih Muslim*. However, he refrained from saying even one

word in explanation of these *Ahadith*, so much so that he did not distinguish them under different chapters although others in this field have done so–Book on *Salat*, Book on Purification, and so on. He did not do it lest it go down as an explanation on the *Hadith* of the Prophet ﷺ, and he might commit a mistake and make himself answerable to Allah for that. He said simply that he had collected the *Ahadith* from which the Ulama may derive knowledge. We can see from it that it is a very delicate task but we find around us that givers of lesson abound: we hear of someone speaking on the Qur'an at some place, someone else explaining the *Ahadith* at some other place though they may lack in knowledge and may not have the required qualifications. The result is there is a plethora of confusion and mischief. Those who attend such gatherings must satisfy themselves that the person imparting lessons in Qur'an or *Hadith* is qualified and worthy of it. They must verify if he has the required knowledge because it is not fit for everyone to impart lessons in this manner. In the same way he who lacks in the required knowledge should not undertake 'collective preaching and call to Islam',. should not give sermons or deliver speeches. He should, of course, carry on with individual preaching and call.

Should One Who Does Not Practice Not Preach

It is commonly believed that anyone who does some wrong should not stop others from the same mistake.Thus, it is said if a man does not offer his *Salat* with the congregation, he should not urge others to join congregational *Salat* unless he himself observes it; this view is not correct. In fact, it is the other way round: the person who invites other people to offer congregational

Salat must also observe them regularly. It is not that one who neglects them should not invite other people! People generally quote the following verse of the Qur'an:-

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لِمَ تَقُوْلُوْنَ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُوْنَ (سورہ صف:٢)

O you who believe, why do you say that what you do not? (as-Saff 61:2)

Some people take it to mean that if anyone does not do something then he must not urge others to do it.For instance, if anyone does not give charity then he must not impell other people to give charity; or, if he does not speak the truth then he cannot recommend others to speak the truth. It is wrong to interpret the verse in this manner. The correct meaning of this verse is: "if you do not possess an attribute then do not claim to have that quality in you." Thus, if a person does not offer his *Salat* with the congregation then he must not say to other people that he observes the congregational prayer; if he is not devout then he must not pretend to others that he is one; if he has not peformed *Hajj* then he must not tell others that he has performed it. "That which you do not do, why do you claim to have done?" is the meaning of the verse but not "That which you do not do, do not ask other people to do." Often, a man benefits from telling others to do good. When he tells others but does not do it himself then he feels ashamed and feels compelled to do it.

One Who Counsels Must Himself Practice What He Preaches

There is another verse of the Qur'an. Allah addresses the scholars of the Jews and tells them:

اَتَاْمُرُوْنَ النَّاسَ بِالْبِرِّ وَتَنْسَوْنَ اَنْفُسَكُمْ (سورہ بقرہ:٤٤)

Do you enjoin virtue upon mankind and yet

you yourselves forget it. (al Baqarah. 2:44)

When a man recommends someone to do some good he must himself remember and behave accordingly. It is not that because he does not practice he will not preach. In other words, one should not feel hindered from advising anyone if one is not doing what he advises. Our elders have emphasised من نکردم شما حذر بکنید "I have not abstained but you do abstain." Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanavi رحمة الله عليه, has said "At some times I sense a drawback within myself then I speak on that very topic the next time I deliver a sermon. It is thereby that Allah reforms me of that shortcoming."

Nevertheless, there are two sides to this question. There is one man who does not practice himself but preaches to other people while there is also the man who practices himself and preaches to other people too. Of course, there is a difference in the results of their efforts. As for him who acts and then recommends, Allah blesses his effort so that what he says is digested by his listeners and they are reformed by that. As for the advice that is not preceded by action, the listeners are not very impressed by it. The tongue speaks and rebounds from the ears of his listeners and the speech is not digested by them. Therefore, it is necessary to endeavour and practice too although lack of it does not debar one from advising other people.

When The Mustahab (desirable) Is Neglected, It Is Not Wise To Reproach

We have seen that it is *fard* to preach to one who neglects the obligatory duties or commits an obvious sin and to 'bid him to the right way and fobid the wrong'. However,. there are certain things that the *Shari'ah* regards as *Mustahab* (recommended or preferrable acts)

which are not *fard* or *wajib* (obligatory). *Mustahab* deeds are those that fetch the doer rewards but do not make a person sinner if he neglects them; or, the *Mustahab* are the etiquettes of *Shari'ah* as explained by the Ulama.The correct procedure is that people should be encouraged to observe the *Mustahab* but if anyone skips observance he should not be reproached for that. We have no authority to reprimand a person who overlooks the *Mustahab* or to insist on his performance. However, a teacher, a mentor, a parent or a guardian may surely point out to his student, disciple, child or ward that he should have observed the *Mustahab* or the etiquette that he omitted previously. As for any other person, one has no right to condemn him for passing over a *mustahab* act. Some people elevate the *Mustahab* to the level of *wajib* and censure those who ignore and overlook their performance. They demand to know why the *mustahab* was ignored although Allah will not ask anyone on the Day of Resurrection why he had omitted the *Mustahab*, neither will the angels put the question. These people appropriate to themselves the authority to question other people's behaviour in this regard.

Supplication After The *Azan*

As an example we may cite the supplication that is made after the *Azan* which is *Mustahab* :

اللهم رب هذه الدعوة التامة والصلوة القائمة آت محمدا، الوسيلة

والفضيلة وابعثه مقاما محمودا، الذى وعدته انك لا تخلف الميعاد

"O Allah, Lord of the perfect call and the salah that is to follow grant Muhammad ﷺ the means of approach to you and eminence, and elevate him to the glorious station that you

have promised him. Surely, you never fail in (your) promise."

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has prompted us to recite this supplication after every *Azan*. It is a blessed supplication. We must teach it to our children and house folk and advise them to recite it after *Azan*. We must also advise other Muslims to pray in these words. But, if anyone does not make this prayer then it is wrong on our part to raise objections or rebuke him. We may only reprimand anyone when an omission involves a *fard* duty or when there is a commission of sin.

Omission Of An Etiquette does not invite Reproach

We come across some behaviour that is not labelled as *Mustahab* in *Shari'ah*, the Qur'an or the *Hadith* yet some Ulama regard them as *Adab* (etiquette). For example, some Ulama advise us that when a man washes his hands before eating he should not clean dry them with a towel.They also tell us that we must sit down to eat before the food is laid; if it happens the other way about and the food is laid before we sit down, we have neglected the etiquette. We do not find mention of these etiquettes in the Qur'an or *Hadith* but the Ulama have told us that these are etiquettes of eating. They do not classify as *Mustahab* too. So, it is not right on our part if we object to a person who cleans his hands after washing them before he sits to eat, or if he waits for the food to be laid down and then sits down at the table spread to eat; we cannot tell such a person that he has violated the *Sunnah* or the *Shari'ah*. These things are neither *Sunnah* nor *Mustahab* and it is wrong to censure anyone who skips them. But, we find people raising objections vociferously on flimsy grounds which they should not.

Sitting Cross-legged When Eating Is Permitted

It is not disallowed to sit cross-legged while eating and no sin is attached to it. However, this posture is not as near to humbleness as the squatting posture (sitting on the hip and bending the legs backward at the knees) or sitting on the hips with one leg bent backwards and the other raised on the foot. Therefore, we must accustom ourselves to eat in one of these postures but if anyone cannot sit in this manner or feels more comfortable in the cross-legged posture then it is not a sin. It is wrongly understood by many people that the cross-legged posture is disallowed while eating; these people must realise their mistake and not reproach anyone who sits cross-legged.

It Is Correct To Eat At the Dining Table

Again, it is not disallowed to eat at the dinning table but to sit on the floor while eating is nearer *Sunnah* and fetches reward because of the imitation of *Sunnah*. Therefore, we must try, as far as possible, to eat while sitting on the floor.The more we follow the *Sunnah* the more the blessings and reward. In spite of that, it is not wrong to eat at the dining table and there is no sin in doing so; therefore, we should not rebuke those who sit at the table to eat their meals.

It Is *Sunnah* To Sit On The Floor To Eat

Tlhe Holy Prophet ﷺ sat on the floor to eat for two reasons. First, much simplicity was observed during those days and there was no concept of chairs and tables, so they sat on the floor. Secondly, there is much humility in eating on the floor and one respects the food as blessings. It is something one may experience oneself by observing his inner feelings in trying both the methods. There is a world

of difference in the two methods because eating on the floor arouses a sense of submisiveness, meekness and devotion to Allah These things are not found in eating at the dining table. Therefore, one must make it a habit to eat on the floor but if one faces a situation when table is used then there is no harm in using it and no sin either. So, it is again wrong to oppose the use of table and chairs vehemently as some people are wont to oppose and call its use unlawful for eating.

Provided The *Sunnah* Is Not Ridiculed

The foregoing reference to eating while being seated on the floor as a *Sunnah* and preferable and more rewarding is subject to *Sunnah* being respected. If there is a possibility of anyone making fun of the *Sunnah* then we must not insist on eating on the floor.

Eating On The Floor In Restaurant

My respected father narrated an incident while he was teaching us once. It was about his visit to Delhi from Deoband with some companions. At Delhi they had to eat their meal but could not find any place so they went to a restaurant. Naturally, food is served on the dining table in a restaurant and two of his companions protested that they would eat on the floor, not at the table. They decided to spread their towels on the floor and order the meal because that was the *Sunnah*. My respected father advised them not to do so but sit on the chairs and eat at the table. They wished to know why they should give up the *Sunnah* and opt to sit at the table, and why should they feel ashamed about it. My father explained to them that it was not a question of feeling ashamed or afraid. "The truth is, he said, "that when you will spread the cloth on the floor

and ask for food you will be conspicuous and other people may laugh at you and be guilty of deriding the *Sunnah*. Not only is that a sin but liable to place them into disbelief." May Allah preserve us from that!

An Event To Learn From

My respected father then recalled to them an incident. It was about a very eminent person, Sulayman Aʻmash. He was the teacher of Imam Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه, The Books of *Hadith* are replete with his narrations. Aʻmash is an Arabic word meaning 'blear-eyed'; one whose eyes are blurred and his eye-lashes drop and whose eyes dazzle because of light. Because he was bleary-eyed, he was called Aʻmash. He had a student who was lame. He was one of those students who kept himself close to his teacher at all times. Some students have that habit and they are constantly with their teacher. They follow him wherever he goes. This student of Aʻmash was one like that. Thus when Imam Aʻmash رحمة الله عليه went to the market, his student Aʻraj because of the lameness-accompanied him. The people in the market passed remarks at the twain: "Look at that! The bleary-eyed teacher (aʻmash) and the lame student (Aʻraj)! So, Imam AʻMash instructed his student not to follow him when he went to the market-place. The student asked "Why? Why should I not accompany you?" Imam رحمة الله عليه said, "When we go to the market, the people make fun of us, calling out: the Aʻmash teacher with the Aʻraj student!" The student put in:

مَالَنَا نُوجَرُوَيَأثَمُونَ

> "We are rewarded for their behaviour while they sin by calling out in that manner. So, we gain thereby and lose nothing."

Imam Aʻmash رحمة الله عليه explained to him.

نَسْلَم وَيَسْلَمُوْنَ خَيْرًا مِنْ اَنْ نُوْجَرَ وَيَأْثَمُوْنَ

"We will be safe and they too will be secure from sinning. That is better than our getting a reward and their committing a sin. It is not obligatory that you accompany me and there is no disadvantage if you do not accompany me. Rather, there is the advantage that these people will be prevented from sinning. So, do not come with me again when I go there".

This is what we mean by understanding religion. On the face of it, the student seemed to say the right thing: If people make fun, let them do it. But if a person has his eyes on the creatures of Allah with compassion, he does not look at their mistakes very much. Rather, he works to protect them from sinning. That is why he disallowed his student from accompanying him. Whenever there is a likelihood of people making more fun, it is better to keep quiet.

A Saying of Hazrat ʻAli رضی اللہ عنہ

The following saying of Sayyidina ʻAli رضی اللہ عنہ is worth remembering:

كَلِّمُوا النَّاسَ بِمَا يَعْرِفُوْنَ اَتُحِبُّوْنَ اَنْ يُّكَذَّبَ اللهُ وَرَسُوْلُـهُ

"Speak to the people about what they know.

Would you like that they should reject Allah and His Messenger ﷺ?" That is, when you speak to them about religion, speak in a manner that does not arouse in them rebellious tendencies. For instance, we must not talk of religion at an inopportune time, lest our listeners are compelled to deny it. It is not correct to speak of religious topics at such times.

An Incident In The Life Of Maulana Ilyas رحمة الله عليه

Every Muslim knows Maulana Ilyas رحمة الله عليه. Allah had inspired him with tremendous love for religion and its dispersion. He would not miss an opportunity to talk about religion. Wherever he went, he would give the call and invite people to work for Islam. It is related about him that someone used to visit him regularly and he came to him for many days. But, he had not grown a beard. When he had come for many days, Maulana Ilyas thought that he was well-acquainted so he said to him, "Brother, I wish that you too adopt the *Sunnah* of the beard." That man felt ashamed on hearing him say that and did not turn up the next day onwards. Maulana Ilyas رحمة الله عليه felt very sorry for that and repented to his companions that he had made a mistake and not waited for the proper opportunity. The result of his hasty action was that the man had stopped visiting him. "If he had been coming, at least, he would have heard something about religion regularly. It would have been beneficial." Anyone else looking at it outwardly would have said that if a person does something wrong we must tell him orally because the Prophet ﷺ has said. "If you cannot prevent evil physically, at least, speak against it with your tongue." But, here the oral utterance proved disadvantageous because that man's mind was still not prepared for advice. It is wisdom that chooses the right time for an action and how it should be done. Religious work is not like throwing stones at will, neither is it a duty that one may ignore. The speaker must assess the situation and see what results he might get, and how will his efforts be received. If it is likely that the results would be adverse then it is better to defer the attempt. This deferment also comes under the inability exemption (that the Prophet ﷺ has defined).

Summary

It is not from reading books alone that one knows what to say, when to say, how to say, when to be stern and when mild. These things are learnt by keeping the company of elders. Only when a man has gone through the rough with religious mentors that he can perceive the proper method. When anyone makes a mistake, it is proper to call that to his attention but one must know when it is *fard* to do so and when not. One must know how to talk. This is the summary of the method of preaching. May Allah make us understand it and may He cause all Muslims to reform through this knowledge. *Aameen.*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العلمين

Series: 72

HOW MAY ONE ACHIEVE COMFORT

DARUL ISHAAT URDU BAZAR KARACHI-1

Venue	:	Jame ʿMasjid Baitul Mukarram Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Karachi.
Date	:	30th October, 1996.

HOW MAY ONE ACHIEVE COMFORT

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد!

عن ابى هريرة رضى الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم انظروا الى من هو اسفل منكم ولا تنظروا الى من هو فوقكم فهو اجدر ان لا تزدروا نعمة الله عليكم (صحيح مسلم، كتاب الزهد، باب نمبر ۱)

All priase is for Allah. We praise Him, ask for His help and seek His forgiveness. And, we believe in Him and place our trust in Him. We seek refuge in Allah from the evil in our souls

and from our mischievous deeds. Whomso Allah guides, none can mislead but whomso He leaves to stray none can guide. and we bear witness that there is no one worthy of worship besides Allah, the Alone, Who has no partner. and we bear witness that our master Muhammad is His servant and Messenger, may Allah shower His blessings on him and on his family and his companions, and may He favour him and give him peace a complete peace, plenty of it.

We have from Hazrat Abu Hurayrah رضی الله عنه, he said that the Messenger of Allah said. "Look upon one who is below you in status and do not look upon one who is above you in status. In this way you will not look down upon the blessings of Allah that He has bestowed upon you." {*Muslim*, Kitb uz Zuhd (piety) *Hadith* #7070}

Look At Those Lower Than You In Status:.

We have read the *Hadith* narrated by Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah رضی الله عنه that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ has advised us to look at those people who are poorer than us in worldly possessions but not to look at those who are richer than us in worldly possessions. The result will be that we will not regard the blessings of Allah that He has granted us as insignificant and worthless (If we look upon the richer people, those higher than us in status, we will not value the blessings of Allah on us and we will be worried on that account.)

Avoid The Love Of The World

Through this *Hadith* the Holy Prophet ﷺ has given us a prescription for removing the love of the world from our hearts, and to achieve true comfort in this world. A man may own worldly possessions but he should not have the love of the world in his heart. It is necessary to own worldly possessions because one cannot live without them. If a man does not have food to eat, a home to live in and clothes to wear, how will he subsist? Therefore, these things are necessary. But, we must not make the pursuit of these things the aim of our life and occupy ourselves in that direction day and night. We must not grow its love in our heart. However, this condition may be achieved by contentment. When a man is content, he has the worldly possessions in his hands but he does not love them and does not hanker after them. If a man loves the world, then he occupies himself all the time in thinking of it and there are a hundred things he wants and craves for and he counts what he has and what he should have and how much he has earned and hopes to earn. This is the love of the world that makes one greedy.

How May One Obtain Contentment

There is a *Hadith Qudsi* that tells us: "If the son of Adam were given a valley of gold, he would love to have a second one; and if he were given the second one, he would love to have a third. Nothing fills the belly of Adam's son except dust."

لا يملأ جوف ابن ادم الا التراب (صحيح بخارى كتاب الرقاق باب مايتقى من فتنة العال حديث ٦٤٣٨)

When he dies and is buried in his grave only then will his belly be filled.

The extraordinary effort that he used to make in the world to amass wealth and possession will go wasted and he will depart from this world empty-handed. However, if Allah grants anyone contentment then that fills his belly; the prescription to obtain contentment is found in the *Hadith* of the Prophet that we read earlier in this essay. Those who seek success in this world and the Hereafter must use that prescription and those who do not use it will suffer discontent and worry all their life. The prescription of the Prophet ﷺ is that we must not look upon those enjoying a standard of living higher than our's for that will prompt us to crave for the things they have and create in us a sense of deprivation. We must rather look upon those who are on a level lower than we so that we will realise how much less they have and this will prompt us to be grateful to Allah for the nice things He has given us. Looking at those at a higher level will make us greedy for the things that we do not have and we will compete with them for those things and feel jealous. This will give rise to avarice and hatred. We will violate the rights of Allah and His slaves in the process. Contentment and the related gratitude to Allah is a great blessing of which many people are deprived. There is no way to obtain peace other than being contented.

Desires Of Worldly Things Are Unending

As for the world we live in, as yet no such man has lived on it who has said, "I have had all I wanted!" This is because desires are unlimited, unending. If a man gets even what Qarun (Korah) had, he will covet for more. The desires of the world are such that the end of one is linked to the begining of the other. An Arab poet Mutanbi has said very wise things. He has said a very true thing about this world:

وَمَا قَضٰى اَحَدٌ مِنْهَا لُبَانَتَهٗ
وَمَا انْتَهٰى اَرَبٌ اِلَّا اِلٰى اَرَبٍ

There hasn't been in the world yet one who has obtained all the pleasures of this world. It is with this world that as one desire is accomplished another crops up!"

The World's Affairs Are Never Fulfilled

We can see that in the story of an unemployed man who seeks an employment and gets one. Once he gets that he looks around and finds other people getting more salary so he wishes that he could earn as much as they. Then he finds some people getting more than him so he aims at that and attains that figure. It goes on in this manner all his life but he will never be peaceful. We read this story in the life of every person today.

The Affairs Of the World Are Never Over:

No one has ever completed the worldly tasks except he who has understood the reality-the Prophets عليهم السلام and their successors who saw the world for what it was worth and who toiled for its possessions only that much as was necessary. They knew that they need not set themselves to amass much wealth unless Allah bestowed on them through His favour. They always looked upon those who were lower than them, not higher in possesssions.

In Religious Affairs One Must Look At The Elevated Ones

In yet another *Hadith*, we see the saying of the Prophet ﷺ: "In the affairs of the world, look at those who are lower than you in status. Look at him who is not

blessed with a favour that you enjoy, and thank Allah for His favours on you. Do not look at those who are at a level higher than you. But, in matters pertaining to religion look at those who enjoy a higher status,.Look at him who is more involved in religious duties while you do not do that much. This will prompt you to take more religious work and create in you a zeal for deeper involvement." So, look at one who is superior to you in religious matters but at one who is inferior to you in worldly matters so that you improve your religious life and your worldly living. This is one of the wise suggestions of the Prophet ﷺ.

An Incident with Abdullah Bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه.

Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه was an eminent juirist, scholar of *Hadith* and *Sufi* of high calibre. He was a contemporary of Imam Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه., and his student too. Before he turned to religion he was a very rich and free-thinking man. He had many properties, including gardens but he was not interested in learning or religion. He was an alcoholic much interested in singing and dancing. Among his gardens, he also had apple gardens. Once he took his friends to one such garden when the apples were ready to pick. There they had plenty of food and wine together with the fresh apples, and music. He himself was a good musician and played the musical instruments very well. They had satiated themselves with food and were deeply intoxicated, the atmosphere was pleasent, 'Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه had a guitar in his hands and he played it. Suddenly he fell asleep. When he woke up, he still had the guitar in his hands. He began to play it again but it would not work. It did not produce any sound. So, he fiddled with the threads and wires and tried again but it did

not emit any sound. He tried it a third time after some more fiddling with it. This time it did work but, instead of producing music, it reproduced the sound of the following verse of the Qur'an:-

اَلَمْ يَاْنِ لِلَّذِيْنَ امَنُوْٓا اَنْ تَخْشَعَ قُلُوْبُهُمْ لِذِكْرِ اللهِ وَمَا نَزَلَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ.....(الحديد: ١٦)

> Has not the time yet come for those who believe, and their hearts should be humble for the remembrance of Allah and the Truth (al Hadid. 57:16)

The guitar gave out this sound. When Allah wishes to guide any of His servants then He provides such unseen means too. The moment Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه heard this voice, his heart accepted the Truth, and he answeed the words of the verse بلی یارب قدان {Surely, my Lord! It has arrived!"} Then and there, he repented and gave up singing and wine, and felt an urge to seek knowledge,.He began acquiring it and became such a great scholar that he was regarded an authority on *Hadith*. He had the honour of being a student of Imam Abu Hanifa رحمة الله عليه. He is cited in *Hadith* and jurisprudence and is placed as a great Sufi.

He Attains An Eminent Position;

Yet another incident is related about him. One evening Harun asl Rashid and his wife were sitting in their palace when there was loud commotion from the outskirts of the city, its fortification. The king feared that an enemy had attacked the city and he despatched someone to investigate. The man reported back that Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه was expected to arrive that day and many people had gone to the outskirts to welcome him. When he arrived, he happened to sneeze. When he sneezed, he said

الحمد لله {Praise belongs to Allah}. Those who had assembled to welcome him said in deference to the prescribed response {May Allah have mercy on you}. The spontaneous and simultaneous response from all the people together raised a loud sound and it was "that sound that your Majesty had heard." When the wife of Harun al Rashid heard this, she said to her husband, "Harun! you think of yourself as a great king who rules over half the world! But, the truth is that royalty is the right of these people who are sovereign in reality because they rule over the hearts of men. They were not driven there by force but they assembled there from love of Abdullah bin Murarak to receive him in such large numbers." This is the position Allah had granted him after he had reformed and turned over a new leaf.

The Comfort that Abdullah Bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه Received

'Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه has said that there was a time in his life when he frequently stayed with the rich people and moved about and ate and drank with them. But perhaps no one else was more sad than he was because which ever friend he visited, he found him more affluent than him. He often took pride in his animal that he rode but when he encountered a friend he realised that his own animal was inferior. It was the same with his dress. He would buy the best of the garments and wear them but always found his friends had better garments on them. He said, "Wherever I went, I found my friends had superior things than I had. Someone had a better house, someone better clothes, someone a better animal to ride.....Then, I took up the company of those people who were not very rich but were men of ordinary means. The result was that I found comfort I had lacked all along. This

was because whoever I went to, I found my condition better than his–my house, my conveyance, my clothes....I thank Allah for that, for having blessed me with better and abundant bounties." This is known as contentment. If a man is not content then he will run after worldly pleasures all his life and will never receive comfort.

Comfort Is A Blessing Of Allah

We say that because comfort is not the name of money and riches. Rather, comfort is the condition of the heart that only Allah the Exalted grants to whom He pleases. "You may build large houses, hire many servants, have at your disposal large limousines, but, with all those luxuries, when you lie down on your bed at night, sleep eludes you although the bed on which you lie is the best available, the mattress the most superior and the pillows most ideal. You keep awake all night, now turning to the right, now to the left. You have to take sleeping pills to induce sleep but the pills lose their power after some time. We see here that all the means of comfort are available but none of these–the palatial house, cars, wealth, air-condictioners–none, can help get the most wanted, yet elusive, sleep. These means are ineffective in removing restlessness. Only Allah can help remove it. On the other side there is the labourer who has neither a worthy bed to sleep on nor a proper room yet when he goes to sleep he wakes up after eight hours of sound sleep. Now, decide for yourself who is comfortable, the labourer or the rich man? Remember, only Allah grants comfort. The means to comfort cannot provide it. *Comfort* is not something that may be bought although the *means of comfort* may be bought at will.

An Eye-Opening Event

Let me narrate to you my own experience of buying an airconditioner for myself. The first step was buying it and when the huge amount was paid for it, I was told that the wiring in my house was weak and needed replacement. When that was done at some expense,the problem of voltage fluctuation was faced and a stabilizer was procured to protect the airconditioner, but that did not help and I was told that a stronger stabilizer was needed to run the air-conditioner safely. In this way, about six months were spent before the airconditioner could be commissioned. I recalled the poetry of Mutanabbi

وما انتهى ارب الا الى ارب

> There is no end to a desire except that it leads to another.

I spent my money and put in personal effort but could not obtain the elusive comfort because that ease and comfort and peace is only granted by Allah. Money cannot buy it.

Let us remember that as long as man does not be content and as long as he does not be grateful to Allah for His blessing, he cannot be comfortable and peaceful no matter how much he spends for it money and effort. The only method of achieving comfort and peace is to follow the advice of Sayyidina Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ that we should look upon the one lower than us in status and not upon the one higher in status. and then be grateful to Allah.

The Adverse Effects Of Looking At the Higher Status

In following this advice, contentment is achieved. But, if we disregard it and look upon those higher than us

then we will always remain grieved and sorrowful. At some time or other that will give rise to jealousy because when a person becomes greedy for the things of this world, he feels jealous of those who have what he does not have. It is a necessary consequence of greed that the greedy person envies him who overtakes him and he feels deprived. The next growth after jealousy is hatred and hostility and enemity. We can see this today in our society. There is a mad race to overtake one another and, as a result, the participants do not even care to distinguish between the lawful and the unlawful. Once a person decides to get something then he does not care how it comes to him, he will use all means available to him to get it, fair or unfair. He will pay bribe or receive it, he will cheat, adulterate, and he will do all the unlawful things to get what he wants. This is because he is not content. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said, therefore, "Be content. Look upon him who is lower than you in status.".

How To Cure Greed & Jealousy

This thing is stated in another *Hadith* in a different set of words:

اذا نظر احدکم الی من فضل علیه فی المال والخلق فلینظر الی من هو اسفل منه ممن فضل علیه (مسلم، کتاب الزهد، باب نمبر ۱)

When one of you looks at one who stands at a higher level than you in regard to wealth and physical structure he should also see one who stands at a lower level than him in regard to these things (in which he stands at a higher level as compared to him). (*Muslim*, Book of Purification).

We had been told in the *Hadith* previously that we

should not look upon one higher than us in status, meaning that we must not make up our minds and look upon him attentively. But it is obvious that man, living in this world, cannot avoid eyeing a person who enjoys a higher standard of living, a richer man, because he often lives with him and comes in contact with him in his day to day affairs. Thus, when this happens and we see anyone richer,or having a better physique, then we must atonce see or think of another person who is weaker than us in wealth and comfort and body. For example, a person may be richer than us or more beautiful or strong or healthier, and we happen to observe him then we must atonce think of another person who is poorer than us and less comfortable, less beautiful and weaker in health. This will curb the growth of greed and jealousy in us on aspiring to attain the first person's level while the second is at a lower status.

That Person Ruins Himself

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ has said in yet another *Hadith*.

تعس عبد الدينار والدرهم والقطيفة الخميصة ان اعطى رضى وان لم يعط لم يرض -

He who is a slave of *dinar, dirham* and valuable clothes and striped sheets will be ruined. If he is given, he is pleased but if he is not given he is displeased (*Bukhari* Book 81 Chapter 10 *Hadith* 6435, and *Muslim*).

While *dinar* and *dirham* are nomeclatures of coins of gold and silver, it refers to anyone who is after money, and the beautiful expensive things of the world. Such a person ruins himself. To be a slave of something is to occupy

oneself in the pursuit of that thing. Such a person is so deeply involved that he neglects the injunctions of Allah. If he is given something he will be happy but if he is not given anything he will not be happy. This behaviour is quite different from the behaviour of the man who is content and pleased with whatever Allah has given him; he thanks Allah when he gets whatever he earns from his lawful effort within the lawful limits. He does not complain on not receiving anything that any other person might own.

All these *Ahadith* call upon us to refrain from loving the material things of this world. The Holy Prophet ﷺ had made his Companions رضي الله عنهم understand very well that the world was meaningless and unreal and its possessions were not something that anyone should run after day and night and worry himself for that. They had learnt that they should occupy in worldly activities and pursuits only to the extent it was necessary.

Ashab us Suffah

Hazrat Abu Hurayrah رضي الله عنه has narrated the following *Hadith*:

لقد رأيت سبعين من اهل الصفة ما منهم رجل عليه رداء اما ازار اما كساء قد ربطوا فى اعناقهم فمنها ما يبلغ نصف الساقين ومنها ما يبلغ الكعبين فيجمعه بيده كراهية ان ترى عورته (بخارى، مفصل جرح)

Indeed, I have seen seventy of the *Ahl us-Suffah* none of whom had more than a sheet of cloth to cover him, neither trousers nor a small blanket. They tied the sheet to their necks that reached half way down someone's shines, or someone's ankles so that they had to gather the sheet lest their private parts be exposed *(Bukhari)*.

Abu Hurayrah رضی اللہ عنہ describes the state of the *as-habus- Suffah.* They were those companions who had relinquished all their affairs and devoted themselves to study religion for which purpose they kept close to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. They were called the *ashab us Suffah.* Those people who have had the good fortune to visit Madinah might have seen a platform in the Masjid Nabawi that is called *suffah.* These companions stayed at this *suffah* day and night. It was their school, college and university where they were taught by the Holy Prophet ﷺ. There was no syallabus for studies, no timings for the classes, no prescribed books. Whenever the Holy Prophet ﷺ arrived and spoke of something, they memorised that. They also listened carefully to what the Prophet ﷺ said in answer to any question that may have been asked by someone, and then they memorised the question and the answer. They observed the behaviour of the Prophet ﷺ and how he dealt with different people and then they remembered it. They devoted their life to this task and they were *Ashab us Suffah* or *Ahl-us-Suffah.* They were the first students in the history of Islam and *Suffah* was the first *Madarasah* in the history of Islam and it was working on a platform or a dais.

The Condition Of the *Ahl us-Suffah*

Hazrat Abu Hurayrah رضی اللہ عنہ was also one of them. In this *Hadith,* he narrates the condition of these people and says, "I saw seventy of them none of whom had a proper pair of clothing to cover their body. Some of them had only one sheet of cloth that they tied to their necks and it dangled to their calves half way down their legs, or some had only a pair of trousers but nothing to cover the upper portion of their body. Those who had tied the sheet

to their necks had to hold it to prevent it from uncovering their bodies and they had to walk very carefully." This was the state in which these Companions رضی اللہ عنہم stayed close to the Prophet ﷺ to gain knowledge. If they had chosen, they could have amassed worldly possessions for they had the ability and the intellect to do that. Allah had blessed them with the tact and understanding like others but they did not incline towards that life. Whatever they received of the bare necessities of life, they showed contentment. In those days there was a pillar on the dais of the *Ahl us Suffah* and the symbol is found to this day to commemorate the original pillar. People used to place bunches of dates on the pillar from which the *ashab us Suffah* ate dates whenever they felt hunger. It was their diet.

The Extreme Hunger Of Abu Húrayrah رضی اللہ عنہ

Hazrat Abu Hurayrah رضی اللہ عنہ tells of his own hunger that he used to remain in the company of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and often would fall down at the door of the Masjid Nabawi worn down from sheer hunger. People would think that he was having an epileptic fit and would pass over his neck because it was believed in those times that anyone suffering from epilepsy would recover if someone passed over his neck placing his foot there. He adds, "By Allah! Neither had I epileptic fits nor did I suffer from convulsions or unconsciousness. It was hunger, very sever, anyone that made me very weak and unable to rise.". This is how Hazrat Abu Hurayrah رضی اللہ عنہ lived and went on to collect and transmit to us five thousand .three hundred and sixty-four *Ahadith*, the highest number of *Ahadith* transmitted by any person.

This is how the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم endured

hunger, lack of proper clothing and food, yet preserved for us the religion of Islam. They have departed and we are much obliged to them for handing down to us the religion in such detail. May Allah elevate their ranks, *Aameen!*

The Method Of the Prophet's ﷺ Training

The Holy Prophet ﷺ had moulded the temperament of his companions رضي الله عنهم in such a way that they no longer craved for worldly possessions nor loved its life but only had the bare necessities with them. Each of them thought of obtaining the favours of Allah in the Hereafter. How did the Prophet ﷺ do it? Let us see the examples of his teachings. Hazrat Abu Hurayrah رضي الله عنه narrates this incident: One day, I came out of my house in the afternoon only to find Abu Bakr and Umar رضي الله عنهما moving about on the street. I wondered why they were there at that time so I asked them the purpose of their being there. They let me know that they were hungry and had nothing to eat at home so they were looking for work as labourers and earn something that might buy them food. After a little while, the Holy Prophet ﷺ also came out and asked them, "Why are you outside your houses?" They said:

ما اخرجنا الا الجوع

> O Messenger of Allah ! It is hunger that has driven us out.

The Prophet ﷺ revealed that he too was outside the house for the same reason. He then took them to the gardens of one of his Campanions but learnt that he was not there. His wife was there. She learnt that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and Abu Bakar and Umar رضي الله عنهما. had come to their garden and her happiness knew no bounds. She said to herself that she was the happiest woman that day. The Prophet ﷺ was their guest. She said to him, "Messenger of

Allah! Do allow me a little time that I may slaughter a goat for you." He said, "You may do that but mind that you do not slaughter one that gives milk". She said that she will slaughter a goat that does not yield milk. Thus, she slaughtered a goat and presented to her valued guests its flesh, fresh dates from the garden and cold water. The Prophet ﷺ and his Companions رضی الله عنهم ate the food. After they had eaten, the Prophet ﷺ said, "Allah has favoured us today with excellent food and drink under the shades of the trees. These are His blessings about which the Qur'an says :

وَلَتُسْئَلُنَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَنِ النَّعِيْمِ

That day you will be asked concerning these blessings.

Allah will say, "We had bestowed on you these favours, how did you spend them?"

You Will Be Asked Concerning The Blessings

This is how the Prophet ﷺ trained them. They were very hungry and then had something to eat. They are told not to make the food and comfort they received as an ideal but to realise that these were blessings of Allah about which they would be liable to reckoning on the Day of Resurrection, how they acquired and used it. This was the manner of thinking of all the Companions رضی الله عنهم.

Death Will Come Earlier

One day the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saw a man repairing his hut. He went near the man and asked him what he was doing. He said that the hut needed repairs and he was attending to it. The Prophet ﷺ did not forbid him but told him only this much مَا أَرَى الْأَمْرَ إِلَّا أَعْجَلَ مِنْ ذٰلِكَ {I do not see death except that it is earlier than that}. The moment

when man will stand before Allah is approaching so fastthat if one thought of it one would not worry about repairs to one's house. The aim in telling that is to make one realise that his house in this world is not a permanent abode but he had to travel further. The house here in this world is a stage in a man's journey and he must make only as much arrangements here as one would in a jouney.This is the method employed by the Holy Prophet ﷺ in training his Companions رضی اللہ عنہم.

Is It Difficult To Observe Religious Duties?

After reading these *Ahadith*, we sometimes begin to think that it is beyond us to observe our duties in religion. We cannot do what Abu Hurayrah , Abu Bakr and Umar or the *Ahl us Suffah* رضی اللہ عنہم did- we cannot endure hunger for days together or clothe ourselves with one sheet of cloth or not repair our house, we cannot perceive the approach of the last Day at the same time as we take up repairs to our home. Let us remember that these events are not recalled to create a feeling of despair but our aim by narrating them is to show that the Holy Prophet, Muhammad ﷺ trained his Companions رضی اللہ عنہم in such a way that they may attain the highest form of conduct and thinking. It is not that everyone can attain that level to receive salvation but ability to act and think varies from person to person and none of the Commands of Allah requires man to go beyond his ability. 'There is a saying in Urdu دیتے ہیں ظرف قدح خوار دیکھ کر that may be translated: Allah deals with every person in accordance with his ability.

Wish to be in The Times Of The Prophet ﷺ

We sometimes hope that we had lived in the times of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. We would have been with the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم. and blessed with the company of the Prophet ﷺ whom we would have seen. We would have participated in battles with him. But, this is part of Allah's plan that He did not create us in that period. Given our current ability and aptitude we might have been with Abu Jahl or Abu Lahb if we were born then. It was the spirit and ability of the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم that they extended support to the Holy Prophet ﷺ in those difficult times. However, our blessed Prophet ﷺ has shown us the path as to eveyone else-born upto the Day of Resurrection on which we must walk to the best of our ability shredding from our hearts the love of the world and greed for its possessions. We are asked to live in the world without loving it or wanting its comforts and pleasures. We must seek its comforts without greed and love in a lawful way and shun the unlawful path. It is only that much which is enough to keep aloof from the world.

Maulana Thanavi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ Was A revivalist of his times

In this era, Maulana Ashraf ali Thanavi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ was a true heir of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and a revivalist of his times. He demonstrated to us in his life-time what we can do within our ability and what we can avoid. May be no one else might explain that better than him. Thus he had outlined for us a principle about how much we may involve oursleves in this world and to what extent we should obtain its possession and how we must conduct ourselves while we are alive. Actually, he had described

this principle for acquiring a building a house but we may apply it to all fields of our life.

Four Reasons For Having A House

He said that a man may acquire a house for one of the four reasons. The first is for residence purposes. It is a house where one may spend the night and protect himself from sun, rain, cold and heat. These things may be had in a hut too. It is permissible to have a house with this thing in mind. The second reason could be *comfort*. Thus he would want a house that serves the foregoing aims and also provides comfort. In a hut or a make-shift house,. a man may live one way or the other but he will not be comfortable there. Rain water might leak in or the sun might heat up the house. To avoid such discomfort, he may build a strong house and that too is permissible. There is no sin in that. The third reason is luxury-or decoration in the house. A man builds a house suitable for his living but the walls are not plastered and the house is not painted. He has the house that is comfortable but not luxurious.When anyone enters it, he does not feel happy. If he paints the house and decorates it somewhat then there is no sin. Allah has allowed him to do that too provided he does that to please himself. There is a fourth reason that prompts anyone to acquire a house and that is ostentatious display. He has a house that allows him to live comfortably and some personal happiness, but he wants to renovate it in a way that prompts other people to describe its beauty and laud his refined tastes and realise his richness. Ths is disallowed and unlawful. Any alteration or renovation that prompts other people to call him a wealthy peson and give him a status higher than themselves then that is unlawful. The gist of what we have

said is that one is permitted to build a house to live in adopt it to provide comfort to him and decorate it to please him but it is unlawful to renovate it so that other people may praise him. Thus, anything that is acquired with an exhibitionist view is disallowed.

The Correct Meaning Of Contentment

The foregoing example and explanations should make the meaning of contentment clear. It means that a man should be pleased at whatever Allah has given him. It does not preclude him from hoping to remedy a shortcoming in his house through proper and lawful means and the repair in that case would classify under comfort. It is not greed. Also, if a man has a good house but wants to improve its looks in his own eyes by adding greenery so that it pleases him then it is not being over-zealous or greedy provided he uses lawful means to attain his goal. But although his house is good and comfortable yet he feels that other people are not impressed with it or his house is not upto the standard of other houses in his locality then it is unlawful if he renovates it. This is because he is driven by demonstrative motives to make it showy and pleasing to other people who may praise and exalt him; it is not within the defination of contentment. If anyone renovates his house through unlawful means then too it is forbidden whether he takes bribe, cheats other people or violates their rights.

Attain The Lowest Rank At Least

The examples of the behaviour of the Companions رضی الله عنهم show that they were people of a very high calibre. If we cannot attain their standard we must, at least, aim at the lowest rank. This is the rank that Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه has described. We can attain that rank only if we are

convinced of the fleeting nature of this life and of the need to prepare ourselves for the Hereafter. Man plans for years together, although he does not know that he might depart from this world the very next day. It is just like a flash that man departs from this life. Therefore, he must refrain from scheming long-term plans but remain content with the bare necessities of life. This contentment will fetch him from Allah comfort in this world and peace in the next. The way to get that is to follow the advice of the Prophet ﷺ, "Look upon those below you and be grateful to Allah. Don't look at those higher than you in status because there is no limit to the high status."

The Case of a Jew

Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه has recorded the case of a Jew who had amassed much wealth. He had stored gold and silver and appointed a guard over the stores. One day, he took his personal keys and went to the stores unknown to the guard to see whether the guard is honest or not. Without the guard knowing it, he opened the stores and examined his treasures. There, finding the door unlocked, the guard re-locked it from outside. When the Jew had finished his examination, he came to the door but found it locked from outside. He shouted from inside for someone to open it for him but his voice did not carry through. The guard never heard him and the man died inside among his gold and silver from hunger and thirst. His treasure not enough to satiate his hunger or quench his thirst, but was the cause of his terrible death. Allah has said about such people

إِنَّمَا يُرِيْدُ اللهُ لِيُعَذِّبَهُمْ بِهَا فِي الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا...... (سورة التوبه:٥٥)

Allah intends only to chastise them in the life of this world..... (at Tawbah, 9:55)

Allah punishes some of those who are worldly minded in this very world through its own means. To preserve oneself from the chasisement he must refrain from looking upon those higher than him in worldly wealth but must look upon those lower than him, and show gratitude to Allah. However, he may obtain his bare necessities keeping himself within proper limits and as a whole, he must cease to work day and night restlessly to amass the wealth and treasures of the world.

The Case Of A Trader:

Shaikh Sa'di رحمه الله عليه has narrated a story in *Gulistan*. He was on one of his travels and was spending the night at the house of a trader who did not let him sleep all night by bragging about himself and his business stories. He told him of his businesses in diffeent lands and his shops at various places and the wares he sold. He informed Shaikh Sa'di what he imported and exported. In this manner he continued to speak night long and said, "All my desires have been fulfilled and my business is prospering. I have got whatever I wanted. I have only one more desire and I intend to travel just once more. Pray for me that I am successful for after that I will be content and restrict myself all my remaining life at my shop".

Shaikh Sa'di asked him what his last desire was. He answered that he wished to carry Persian Sulphur to China where it would fetch a good price. From China he would carry chinaware to Rome from where he would take cloth to India. From there he would buy iron for Syria."I will buy glass there and sell it in Yemen. Then, I will return to Persia with Yemeni cloth.". In short, he had made a very ambitious plan of travel and trade, and asked Shaikh Sa'di to pray for him. He assured him that thereafter he would

be content and bind himself to his shop all his life. Shaikh Sa'di then said to him:

آن شنیدستی که در صحرائے غور
بار سالارے بیفتاد از ستور
گفت چشم تنگ دنیادار را
یا قناعت پر کند یا خاک گور

He related to the trader the story of a big merchant. In a desert, the merchandise of this trader lay on the ground fallen from his camel that lay dead on a side. On the other side, the merchant lay on the earth dead. His merchandise seemed to say, "The narrow outlook of a worldly man is satisfied only through contentment or the grave! There is no third way to satisfy it." *(Gulistan Sa'di,*Story 23 P-119)

Worldly Possessions Can Turn Into Assets For The Hereafter

Shaikh Sa'di رحمة الله عليه has commented thereafter that when man is dictated by worldly desires then he does not think of anything else. It is this love of the world that we are asked to eschew. If a person is not tied down in the love of the world and is also blessed by Allah with riches to which he is not much attached so he continues to obey Allah and spend his wealth in Allah's cause then not only does he gain Paradise through it but his wealth is also an asset for him in the Hereafter. But when his wealth stops him from his religious duties then this person is said to be in love with the world.

How May Love Of The World Be Lessened

Man must give a little time to contemplate on his negligence so that he softens his love for the world and

replaces it with love for the Hereafter. He must contemplate how day and night he is disregarding death, the time of recknoning, possibility of reward and punishment and the Hereafter. Man must take out some time to ponder and think that he has to die. What will happen then? How will he fare before Allah? The questions that will be asked and the replies that he will give. He must make it a daily practice to contemplate in this manner. Maulana Thanavi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ used to say that if anyone contemplates on this line every day then he will sense within a few weeks *Insha Allah* that his love for the world is dwindling.

He Was Given All The World

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a *Hadith*

مَنْ اَصْبَحَ مِنْكُمْ آمِنًا فِيْ سِرْبِهٖ مُعَافًا فِيْ جَسَدِهٖ عِنْدَهٗ قُوْتُ يَوْمِهٖ فَكَاَنَّمَا خِيْزَتْ لَهُ الدُّنْيَا (ترمذی، ابو اب الزهد، باب ماجاء فی الزهاد فی الدنیا)

The one among you, who wakes up in the morning peaceful in his house, sound in his body and having food for the day, is as one who is given the world with all its possessions (Tirmizi).

(i) The person who wakes up in the morning in his house fearless with no possibility of harm from an enemy or an oppressor, (ii) who has no pain in his body but is healthy with no illness, and (iii) who has food with him for the day. The person who has these three things is one who is given the world with all its possessions. Therefore, anyone who has these things has his needs fulfilled and he must be grateful to Allah for that. He must not show ingratitude.

Be Grateful For These Blessings

This *Hadith* encourages us to do two things. The first is to make it a habit to thank Allah always, and to avoid being ungrateful. It is very wrong on our part to show ingratitude. We enjoy numerous blessings of Allah in so many different ways yet when we face anything against our temperament we forget the blessings on us and become ungrateful. We do not endure minor difficulties. This behaviour is wrong because the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said that if anyone gets the three things (mentioned above) he has got everything in the world. If we do not get more than that then we must not complain and be ungrateful. The position is that these days instead of being grateful most people respond with "We carry along," or "The time passes on," when they are asked how they are. May Allah protect us and preserve us from being ungrateful. These words mean "Allah has not blessed me with any favour and I am surrounded with difficulties but I am facing this situation boldly." The true method is that if anyone asks someone how he is then he must recall the favours of Allah on him and thank Him, saying الحمدلله {Praise be to Allah} "I am thankful to Him for His blessings on me." If anyone faces a trying situation then he must pray to Allah, "O Allah! You have bestowed on me innumerable blessings and the difficulty that I am facing is also a kind of blessing. But, I am weak and cannot bear it. O Allah! Remove it through Your mercy." This is what he must say and not that he is living in difficulty.

Do Not Devise Ambitious Plans

Those of us who find it difficult to live their lives smoothly are to blame themselves because they chalk out ambitious plans for the future. They conceive for

themselves large houses, beautiful cars, a retinue of servants, a hefty bank balance and luxuries. They imagine a utopian life for themselves. Naturally, they cannot achieve the target they set for themselves and then they become ungrateful and complain.The foregoing *Hadith* tells us clearly that we are wrong to chalk out ambitious plans for ourselves because if we have the three things then we have everything. The Prophet ﷺ has said that if a man has peace in his house, a healthy body, and guarantee of the day's food for himself and his family then he has everything the world can give. If anyone tells himself that these three things by themselves are enough-then when he gets more, he will thank Allah and say "I was not entitled to that but You gave that to me through Your mercy." But, if he does not get more than those three things then he will not be ungrateful in the least, because he has made up his mind that he has had enough, and that is all he craves for. Anyway, it is our fault that we draw up extraordinary imaginative plans and then grumble in dissatisfaction when they do not materialise.

Do Not Worry Much for The Next Day.

When we hear and read the saying of the Prophet ﷺ that if we have nourishment for the day we have everything in the world, a question arises in our minds, "What of the next day? and, what after that? The truth is that this *Hadith* emphasises that we do not know whether we will see the next day and if we do, then the Master who has given us today will bless us with his benevolence always. Allah has said very explicitly:

وَمَا مِنْ دَآبَّةٍ فِي الْاَرْضِ اِلَّا عَلَى اللهِ رِزْقُهَا وَيَعْلَمُ مُسْتَقَرَّهَا وَمُسْتَوْدَعَهَا (سورة هود: 6)

And there is not a creature on the earth but upon Allah rests its sustenance, and He knows its dwelling place and its repository. (11:6)

Thus, Allah has taken upon Himself the sustenance of every creature and He knows where it lives so He will cause its sustenance to be delivered to it. Therefore, we are required to work and trust in Him and He will provide us with nourishment. Let us do that and thank Allah for whatever we have with us today. Allah has promised those who thank Him that He will grant them more. لَئِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيْدَنَّكُمْ {If you give thanks,certainly I will give you move} (*surah Ibrahim*, 14:7)

Peace Is Found In Contentment

This *Hadith* also teaches us that in contentment lies peace and security. Contentment is satisfaction with whatever Allah has given us after we have adopted lawful means for livelihood. We must not covet something more because there is no other way to be happy in this world. A man may amass wealth and build palatial houses but he cannot be peaceful if he is not content. If he has all the imaginable riches, he cannot buy peace but if he has the asset of contentment then he will be happy with the slightest amount of food and the fulfilment of the bare necessities will bring him peace and satisfaction. This statement will be found correct by anyone who experiments it.

How Do Rich Fare

We are accustomed to measure everything in terms of worldly standards. Thus, when a poor man looks at a rich contemporary and the way he conducts himself getting what he likes, the poor man supposes that the

richer man is very happy and very fortunate. He considers himself deprived and longs for a like richness. But, he does not know the facts. He does not know if the rich man is really peaceful and happy. There are many affluent men whom other people may take to be very happy and carefree, but, because they come to me with their problems, I know that looks are deceptive. They have their problems. Outsiders cannot realise what a terrible life they lead. Many rich men have come to me and lamented, "Perhaps, we had not received this wealth! May be, we would have been more peaceful without it."

Money cannot Buy Peace

We have seen, therefore, that peace and comfort do not necessarily go with money. These things are bestowed on us by Allah. If He wills He may grant peace and comfort to a man of meagre means while He may not let the affluent have it. Therefore, how long we shall race after the world's riches? When will we stop planning utopion schemes? The Prophet ﷺ has told us, therefore, that we must realise that the world is not a place to live for ever. If one gets the necessities of life then it is enough and if he is content with that then he will be peaceful but if he is not content then let him run after wealth and riches but he will not earn peace and security. We have the example of some multi-millionaires. They need not work for more money and if they are idle, their wealth will not exhaust all the rest of their lives yet we see that they do not call it a day but go on working for more money. They use all means, lawful and unlawful, to further their business and increase their wealth. This carries on in spite of the fact that they do not know where they will use their money.

The Costliest Place In the World Is In Los Angeles

When I had visited the United States. one of my friends took me to a Shopping area in Los Angeles and told me that it was the costliest of the shopping markets in the world. He said, "Everything here is costlier than anywhere else." When I asked him how much costlier, he gave me an example, "A pair of socks here costs two thousand dollars." (About eighty-five thousand Rupees!)." A tie is worth three thousand dollars, and a man's suit is somewhere between ten thousand to twenty thousand dollars." There were more expensive things. He showed me a shop in which there was an enclosure that a client could only enter in the company of the owner. There, the owner would advise the client which suit was most suitable for him and would charge him ten thousand dollars for his advice, the cost of the purchase being additional. Prince Charles once sought his advice and was told to see him after six months.

The Other Side Of Affluence

The truth is that man has not given up his greed for wealth, for abundance. When he amasses it, he does not know where to use it. So, various ways are invented to use the accumulated wealth. While wealth is being wasted in this manner by some people, there are other people who beg for pennies too! We had just drove down the road, not more then a mile, when we found different people begging for money at various traffic lights. One such beggar approached us as we stopped at the red light and my friend told him that he did not carry any money then but the beggar insisted that he was not asking for much, he simply wanted cents because he was very hungry. This is the

obverse side of affluency that buys a pair of socks for two thousand dollars. There should be a limit to accumulating wealth. Let a person first spend what he has with him before he thinks of earning more. Greed knows no bounds. It is known as جوع البقر (*Ju'al Baqar*) hunger of the Cow (that always munches)- hunger that never satiates, thirst that is never quenched, no matter how much one eats and drinks!

The Itching Hands

One day, one of our very rich man who is regarded among the few eminent people of our country, visited me. While we were talking about different things, I remarked that Allah had blessed him with much wealth and riches. "It is the mercy and blessing of Allah on you so that people are enviable of you. Let this wealth be an asset for you in the Hereafter by putting it to good use. Besides, now that Allah has bestowed on you with so much wealth and you have earned plenty, repent to Him and keep away from interest dealings." He listened to me and then entered on a discussion on interest dealings and wished to know how could it be unlawful. "One cannot progress in this life without interest dealings, or do any business." I tried to explain to him the facts and finally he seemed to agree. "But," he said, "I cannot stop the itch within me. It does not cease. No matter how much my business expands. The result of this urge is that my family life stands demolished and I have no peace at home nor comfort with my children. There is a bickering within the family. I have plenty of wealth but don't find comfort and peace."

Qarun, (Korah) The Richest Man

Allah has said in the Qur'an about Qarun (Korah):

وَاِنَّ مَفَاتِحَهُ لَتَنُوْٓاُ بِالْعُصْبَةِ اُولِي الْقُوَّةِ (سورة القصص: ٧٦)

The very keys of them would have weighed down a company of men endowed with strength (al Qasas. 28:76)

The keys alone of his treasures were so heavy that a group of people used to carry them along. It was not within the powers of any one man to carry them. When he passed by people displaying his riches to them, some of them said

يَـا لَيْتَ لَنَا مِثْلَ مَآ اُوْتِيَ قَارُوْنَ اِنَّهُ لَذُوْحَظٍّ عَظِيْمٍ (القصص: ٧٩)

Would that we had the like of what Qarun has been given. Surely he is a man of mighty good fortune.... (al Qasas 28:79)

The Qur'an has said about these people that they only looked at what was obvious of his condition from his richness. That is why they considerded him worth envying. They did not foresee the punishment that was in store for him. Thus, when they saw his fate, these very people said, "It is the mercy of Allah that He did not make us like him." This shows that there is no limit to the wealth of the world that a man may run after. So, how far he will go to fetch it? He will never be satisfied at any point except when he obeys the direction of the Holy Prophet ﷺ to observe contentment. It means to be content with whatever one gets through a reasonable effort in a lawful manner.Once a person gains contentment then he will feel peaceful and comfortable with whatever he has of worldly possessions through the mercy of Allah; this wealth is not available to Kings and Royalty, and to rich men.

An Incident In The Life Of Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه

When my respected father, Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه came to Pakistan, the Government of Pakistan had established a Board for Islamic Education attached to the Constituent Assembly. My father was also appointed as its member. This Board was one of the sections of the government. After some time the government did something wrong and my father spoke against it for which some of the government officers remarked to my respected father that he was a member of the Board and part of the Government so he should not have criticised it. My father told them that he had consented to become a Member for no other reason but for the sake of religion. As a worker in that direction, it was his duty to say what was correct whether that was in agreeement with the line of the government or not. He clarified that he was not a government servant and unlike them was not worried about losing the employment. He said, "I have my resignation letter in my pocket and my expenses do not exceed two rupees, so I am not dependent on salary and allowances like you. I can earn that much money by hard work anywhere else while you cannot because your suit alone costs two hundred rupees. So, you might fear losing your job. By the Grace of Allah, I have no such fear."

We Cannot Control Income But We May Control Our Expenses

My respected father also used to say that a man has no say over his income although he has control over his expenditure. It is easier for him to reduce his expenses, and be content. *Insha Allah* he will not be worried. A man becomes worried only when he makes out plans beforehand

calculating a high income. The trouble arises when he does not achieve that figure of income. On the other hand that man enjoys comfort and lives peacefully who reduces his expenses, has fewer needs and lives a simple life, moulding it according to his income. He is satisfied with what Allah gives him. This man is said to live a life of contentment.

We Must Make This Suplication

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ has taught us the following supplication and urged us to make it often

اَللّٰهُمَّ قَنِّعْنِیْ بِمَا رَزَقْتَنِیْ وَبَارِكْ لِیْ فِیْهِ

"O Allah! Make me content with that which you have provided me of the sustenance, and bless it for me."

This is a very suitable supplication that the Prophet ﷺ has taught us. Every word of it is meaningful and the whole of it is compact. Allah be glorified! If this supplication is granted to us, all our problems will be solved because once we are content we will also be relieved of the urge to earn more, to eat more and amass worldly possessions. This will bring us peace and comfort. The prayer also asks for 'blessings in the sustenance' which means that even a little will provide a large benefit.

Meaning Of Blessings

The words *barakah* and *mubarak* are used frequently but few people know their meaning. When someone buys a house or a car or gets married, we say to him "Allah may bless that for you." *Barakah* and *Mubarak* are a blessing meaning, "May Allah make that a means of comfort for you such that even if it may not be large it may provide you much advantage."

The Age Of Statistics

We live in a world of *statistics*. Today, everything is counted and measured. People count money. They measure their income and their salary. But, no one measures the advantages reaped by this exercise. An European Muslim has written a very good book, The *Reign Of Quantity*. It is *numbers* that rule the world.

Example of blessings & lack of it

Let us take the example of a man who has earned a hundred rupees. As he was returning home aiming to go by bus, a friend met him and offered him a lift in his car saying he was going on the same route as his house. When this man goes to buy something, he gets it at a discount. These are two examples of blessing in his income, the hundred rupees are stretched. If he had not been offered the lift (or the discount), he would have spent from his hundred rupees. We take another example of a man who earns a hundred thousand rupees. He arrives at his house, happy. But he learns that his son is unwell. The doctor asks for a number of laboratory tests that cost thousands of rupees and then advises him to hospitalise his son. Tlhis man's money is spent on medical tests, hospital and doctor's fees and medication. This means that his money lacked blessing.

Bribery & Interest Lack Blessings

It is with bribery that there is lack of blessings in that. A person who receives bribe spends it on unexpected heads, like having to bribe other people. He may be happy receiving bribe and multiplying his money but he has to spend it, sooner or later, in bribing many other people. His money will exhaust in this manner and that means lack of blessings. Blessings are bestowed by Allah and it is not in man's power to get them.

Therefore, the Holy Prophet ﷺ has urged us to make the supplication, "O Allah! Give me contentment with the sustenance that you have bestowed on me and bless it for me."

Blessings In The Salaries Of Dar-ul-Uloom

The blessings a man receives on being content are seen in the salaries of the teachers of Dar-ul-Uloom, Korangi, Karachi. The salaries of teachers and staff are meagre by all standards, any of them may be interviewed and it will be confirmed that the purchasing power of these salaries is higher than that of the fat salaries of outsiders. This is *barakah* that Allah grants. The *barakah* is the lot of those who show contentment.

The Third Portion Of The Supplication

There is a third clause too in the supplication that we are discussing:

وَاخْلُفْ عَلٰى كُلِّ غَائِبَةٍ لِيْ مِنْكَ بِخَيْرٍ

> "O Allah! Those things that my heart desired to receive, but I could not get, O Allah! Grant me things better than those things that you know are better!"

Thus, this prayer has three clauses. The first time the supplicant prays to be blessed with *contentment*. The second time he prays for *blessings*. The third time he prays to be given a *better* thing (than what he is denied). There were some of the things that he longed for but did not get, he supplicates Allah for something better than that. for instance, he may have longed for a car but he could not get it. So he tells Allah, "You have not given me what I desired then surely there must be some reason behind the denial. O Allah, let me have instead something

that is better in your sight for me." What more could a man ask for once he gets all these three things–he is content with what he has, that what he has is blessed and he receives a substitute for what he has not received.

Contentment is a great asset

There is no wealth greater than contentment. Today, everyone counts money, house, possessions as wealth and assets. We must know that none of these is wealth. True wealth is contentment. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said, according to a *Hadith*:

لَيْسَ الْغِنٰى عَنْ كَثْرَةِ الْعَرْضِ وَلٰكِنَّ الْغِنٰى غِنَى النَّفْسِ (صحیح بخاری، کتاب الرقاق، باب الغنی غنی النفس)

> "Richness is not abundance of property and possessions but richness is self-contentment."
>
> (*Bukhari*, Book 81 of Ar-Riqaq (Softening of Hearts.) Chapter 15 Hadith# 6446)

Thus, abundance of property and possession is not a sign of wealth and riches but self-contentment is senonymous with wealth and riches for such a man's heart is unconcerned and independent of wants. He does not extend his hand before anyone else, he does not narrate his need to anyone else and he does not attempt to gather wealth through unlawful means. He is satisfied with what he possessses and is resigned to the fact that what he has not received was not good for him; if that was good for him, he would have got it but since he has not received it, Allah knows that it was not beneficial for him.

The Contentment Of The Prophet ﷺ

An angel presents himself before the Holy Prophet ﷺ and says, "If you command the Mount Uhud, would turn into

gold and that would belong to you." The Holy Prophet ﷺ refused the offer saying, "I wish to spend my life in such a way that when I get anything to eat, I should thank Allah and when I do not get it, I may be patient. In this way, I would receive the blessings of gratefulness and I would not wish to have large wealth and possessions and I would receive the blessings of patience too. I want the wealth that would pull me towards Allah." So, he also made this supplication:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّی اَعُوْذُبِكَ مِنْ كُلِّ غِنًی يُطْغِيْنِیْ

"O Allah! I seek your protection from every such wealth that causes me to be rebellious."

Summary

The gist of my statement is that this *Hadith* teaches us two things. One of these is that we should thank Allah for whatever we have received, even if it is a very minor thing. We must refrain from being ungrateful. We must sit down a while and concentrate on the blessings Allah continues to shower on us. It is our existence, our life, our breathing, our eyes, ears, teeth, face, hands and feet. These are Allah's blessings and none of them can be bought if we happen to lose any. We must think of our health, house, family, peace, comfort, and such blessings and thank Allah for that. The second thing it teaches us is that we must not look at any person who has a higher worldly rank than us, but we must look at him who is lower than us in worldly matters. In affairs of religion we must look at him who enjoys a higher rank. The third lesson this *Hadith* teaches us is that we must be content with what we have. But contentment does not mean that we must not adopt reasonable means; we are not precluded from adopting reasonable means. For example, a man may do business, take up service, cultivate the land and

what he gets lawfully from these reasonable means, he must be content with it. He should not try to make up any shortfall through unlawful means. He must be contented and pray to Allah. "O Allah! Grant me contentment and bless whatever favours You have granted me.

May Allah grant me and all of you the wealth of contentment and inspire us to obey the sayings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ *Aameen*.

And our last prayer is Praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.

و آخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Series: 73

DO NOT TROUBLE OTHER PEOPLE

DARUL ISHAAT URDU BAZAR KARACHI

Venue	:	Jame ʿMasjid Baitul Mukarram Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Karachi.
Date	:	28th February, 1997.

DO NOT TROUBLE OTHER PEOPLE

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهد ان سيدنا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد

عن ابى موسى الا شعرى رضى الله تعالى عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم المسلم من سلم المسلمون من لسانه ويده (ترمذى، كتاب الايمان، باب نمبر ١٢)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and ask Him for forgiveness. And we believe in Him. and trust in Him. We seek refuge in Allah. from the mischief of our souls

and from our evil deeds. He whom Allah guides none can mislead and whom He leaves to stray none can guide. And, we bear witness that there is no god except Allah Who is Alone and has no partner, and we bear witness that Sayyidina Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and Messenger–May Allah bless him and (likewise) his family and Companions. And may He favour him and give him peace.

We have it from Abu Musa al-Ashari رضی الله عنه that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ has said "A Muslim is he from whose tongue and hands other Muslims are safe." (Tirmizi, Book of Faith, Chapter 12)

He Is Not A True Muslim

This *Hadith* is transmitted by Sayyidina Abu Musa al-Ashari رضی الله عنه and it implies that a Muslim is one who does not cause trouble to another Muslim by his tongue or by his hand. The *Hadith* describes a Muslim and tells us that only he is a Muslim who has these attributes. Therefore, if other people are not safe from the hand or tongue of a Muslim then truly this man is not entitled to be called a Muslim. He is like one who does not offer *Salat*. Although no jurist will decide that such a man is a non-Muslim because he neglects regular *Salat* yet he is not truly entitled to be called a Muslim because he does not observe the most significant of the duties imposed by Allah. In the same way the person whose hand and tongue cause trouble to other people is not called a disbeliever by a jurist but, in the light of this *Hadith*, he is not entitled to be called a Muslim because he does not behave like one.

What Is Social Living

There are five sections in Islam.

(i) Belief.

(ii) Worship.

(iii) Dealings or Behaviour.

(iv) Character and Manners; and

(v) Social living.

This *Hadith* is the base on which the fifth section stands. No one lives alone in this world; neither is he asked to live alone. So, he has links with someone or the other–his family, friends, neighbours, other people, where he buys or sells or he works. How, then should he conduct himself with these people. This is the principle and rule of social living and it is a significant part of religion. Unfortunately, due to our negligence and irresponsible attitude that we have cast it aside and do not even consider it as part of religion. We do not pay heed to the commands of Allah and His Messenger ﷺ in this regard.

Importance Of Social Rules

Allah has given particular importance to social rules for us. We can see it in the way the Qur'an deals with one of the principles of social living: *to seek permission before entering anybody's house*. The Arabic word for seeking permission is *Istizan* Allah has revealed two complete *rukus* (sections) in the Qur'an to describe *istizan*. We can guage the importance attached to it from the fact that the command to offer *Salat* is discussed some sixty-two times in the Qur'an but it is left to the Holy Prophet ﷺ to describe how to offer it. The Qur'an does not tell us the method of offering it. But, details of *istizan* are mentioned by the Qur'an itself and not left for the Prophet ﷺ to describe. Besides, a large portion of *surah al–Hujurat* is devoted to

social laws. Thus, on the one hand such a great importance is attached to social conduct and on the other we ignore that in our daily life and do not even know its rules.

Maulana Thanavi رحمته الله عليه Revives Rules Of Social Way Of Living

In his times, Allah has caused Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanavi رحمة الله عليه to revive those sections of religion that had been put in the background. People had forgotten that these were part of our religion. Maulana Thanavi recalled their significance and taught us their rules .It was in his *khanqah* that he gave it practical shape. It was supposed previously that a *khanqah* is a recluse: people sit in rooms and chant 'Allah' Allah' and occupy themselves in *zikr* (remembrance of Allah, devotional exercises) and worship. Maulana Thanavi did not lay as much emphasis on *zikr* and optional worship as he placed on social conduct. He educated his disciples to avoid inconveniencing other people. He used to say that when his disciples failed to observe the devotional exercises that he prescribed, he felt sorry for their dereliction but when he learnt of one of them violating social conduct or causing hardship to someone he felt hatred for that man.

First Become A Human Being.

It is known, too, that Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه frequently said, "If you wish to become a Sufi or an ascetic then you will find many other *khanqahs* for that purpose where you may go. If you wish to perfect yourself as a human being, you should come here. We mould them here. To become a Muslim, a Scholar or a Sufi is the next step and it is a higher status. You must first enter the human field, and come out of the rows of animals. You can only achieve that by learning the Islamic etiquettes of

social living and behaving according to them."

Three Types of Animals

In his *ahya ul Ulum,* Imam Ghazali رحمة الله عليه has said that Allah has created three types of animals. One of these types are beneficial to mankind and it is very rare that they harm man. Examples of this type are: cows, sheep, and so on. They are beneficial because they give milk and when they do not, they are slaughtered for their meat; that is, they give up their lives to benefit man. These animals do not harm anybody. The second type includes animals that are always harmful to man and there is no apparent benefit from them. Examples of this kind are snakes, scorpions, beasts of prey, and so on; they are all harmful animals. They bite man. The third kind of animals are those animals that neither benefit nor harm. These are found in the wild and include fox, jackal, and others. Man does not gain from them nor is harmed by them to a noticeable extent. After recalling these types of animals, Imam Ghazali رحمة الله عليه addresses man and says, "O Man! You are the Best creation and you enjoy excellence over all animals. If you do not behave as a human being but wish to live as an animal then at least initate the first kind of animal who benefits other creatures but does not harm them, like the cow and goat. But, if you wish to stoop lower then become like the third type that neither harms nor benefits. If you are not like either of these and cause harm to other people instead of benefitting them then you have grouped with the second type of snakes and scorpions, and the like."

They Are Human Beings

So we see that the question of Muslim or non-Muslim, scholar or not, ascetic or not, is not of immediate import. The first thing for a man is to behave like humans. To do that it is necessary that he tread the Islamic Social way of living. He should not be responsible for causing even the slightest of inconvenience to any one else, by his hand or tongue or through any effort whatever. Once Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه said in a spirit of humbleness, "Even I am not a perfect and complete human but–praise be to Allah - I have seen what human beings are like. So I cannot be deceived by a bull who claims to be human. So I will aim at that, *Insha Allah*, and will not be deceived into behaving like a bull".

Save Other People From Harm

As far as voluntary devotional exercises are concerned, no one will be taken to task for omiting these forms of worship but if anyone observes them, he will be rewarded for that in the Hereafter. Nevertheless, these are virtuous deeds, and one must accustom oneself to do them. On the other hand, if anyone is behind the hardship another person suffers then he has committed a grave sin and he will be taken to task for that commission. This is why *Shari'ah* tells us to abandon voluntary worship when there is a possibility of helping someone out of difficulty or saving him from that.

Importance of Congregational *Salat*

We know that men are urged strongly to offer their obligatory *Salat* with the congregation. It is so important that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said, "I feel like appointing someone else to lead the congregational *Salat* when the

time comes and go out myself to visit every house and see if anyone has stayed behind. Then, I should set the houses of those who remained behind a fire because they neglect their duties to Allah." This shows the importance attached to congregational *Salat*. Some of the jurist regard offering *Salat* with the congregation as *sunnah muwakkadah* but some othres give it the higher status of *wajib*. Prayer in congregational form is a perfect form while in an individual capacity is an imperfect form. We also have the example of the Holy Prophet ﷺ when he was ill before his death and could not walk with ease and had appointed Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ as Imam in his place. At such a moment too, he came to the mosque to offer the congregational prayer supported by two men. This stresses the importance of *Salat* with the congregation.

When Is One Not Allowed To Go To The Mosque?

The jurists have decided unanimously that a man who is ill and smells badly then he must not go to the Mosque. It is not merely that he is allowed to stay away from congregational prayer but he is not even allowed to join it, and if he joins it, he will be committing a sin. If he joins the congregation, he will inconvenience other people because of the bad odour. We must see that such an important thing as congregatgional *Salat* is disallowed if it becomes a cause of inconvenience to other people..

Causing Hardship To other People When Kissing The Black Stone

We all know the importance of the *Hajr Aswad* (the Black Stone, at *Ka'bah*). We are told that kissing the Black Stone is like shaking hands with Allah, and it effaces a

man's sins. The Holy Prophet ﷺ and his companions رضی الله عنهم themselves kissed the Black Stone which also highlights its importance. In spite of that we are advised that if in attempting to kiss it we might push other people and cause them difficulty then it is not proper to kiss it; rather that is sinful. *Shari'ah* is very particular that one does not cause another man even a little bit of difficulty. Such important forms of worship as congregational *Salat* and kissing the *Hajr Aswad* are abandoned only because we might not hurt anyone else; thus, the lesser forms that are voluntary should also be postponed when such a situation arises.

Reciting The Qur'an Loudly

We may cite the example of reciting the Qur'an, too. It is such a virtuous act that the reciter is rewarded tenfold on reciting each letter. In other words a person amasses rewards when he recites the Qur'an.Of all the devotional exercises, recital of the Qur'an is the most excellent. Then, an audible recital is preferred. An audible recital secures more reward than an inaudible. But, if there is a likelihood of disturbing someone's sleep because of the sound then it is not allowed to recite audibly.

How Did The Prophet ﷺ Arise For Tahajjud *Salat*

The Holy Prophet ﷺ woke up in the night for Tahjjud *Salat*. Never in his life did he miss the Tahjjud *Salat*. But, Allah and His Messenger ﷺ made it easy for us and did not say that the *Tahajjud Salat* was obligatory for us although it was so for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. He never missed it. In spite of that we are told in a *Hadith* that whenever he got up for *Tahajjud* he was very quiet and never made a noise or let the door squeak lest the sleep of any of his wives be

distrubed. The Qur'an and *Hadith* tell us that we must not cause the slightest difficulty to anyone.

Praying On the Thoroughfare

It is not proper to offer prayer at a place where people pass by. Some people do not heed this. Take for example the mosque. Although the front rows are vacant, some people pick up the very last row and offer their *Salat* there. The result is that those who have to go out of the mosque or come into it, find it difficult. Either they make a detour round such people or commit a sin by walking in front of them. To offer *Salat* in such a manner is not proper. Rather, it is a sin.

'Muslim' includes Security

The *Hadith* we are discussing may be repeated here المسلم من سلم المسلمون من لسانه ويده {A Muslim is one from whose tongue and hand other Muslims are secure}. The word *Muslim* is an Arabic word whose root is *seen lam mim* which is also the root word of the word meaning *security*. Thus implied *security* or *safety* is included in the word *Muslim*.

The meaning of as-salam 'Alaicum

When non-Muslims meet they greet each other with a *'hello'*, *'good morning'*, *'namstay'* or *'adab'*. They have different words of greetings. but, the Islamic form of greeting is السلام عليكم {as-salam 'alykum} meaning *Peace be on you*. Apart from greeting, these words offer a prayer for the safety of the person greeted whereas every other form of greeting does not include any prayer. The addressee receives no benefit thereby. But when a man greets the other with *as-salam 'alay kum Wa rahmat Allah Wa barkatuhu* he prays for three blessings as we see in the meaning of these

words: Peace be on you and the Mercy of Allah and His Favours. This is a supplication and if it receives the approval of Allah even once, the person addressed benefits for the rest of his life from the blessings. Besides, by using these words the addressee is assured of safety and security at the hands of the speaker. The former is then confident that he will not suffer hardship through the latter. A Muslim, when he greets in this way, conveys to the other that he has brought the message of peace for him and will not torment him.

The Meaning Of Security From The Tongue

The *Hadith* describes a Muslim as one from whose tongue and hand other Muslims are safe. To be safe from the tongue is to be satisfied that he will not say anything that might dishearten the other, cause him difficulty or displease him in any way. So, even when that man is to be censored such words may be used as do not cause heart-burning. For instance, he must be told in simple terms that his action was not proper or that he must re-consider his behaviour or that it was not in line with *Shari'ah*. He must not be cursed or taunted. Anything said in an indirect manner that injures is taunt and it causes a deep wound. The Arabic couplet further explains:

جَرَاحَاتُ السِّنَانِ لَهَا الْتِيَامُ

وَلَا يَلْتَامُ مَا جَرَحُ اللِّسَانُ

"The wound caused by the sword heals sooner or later but when it is caused by the tongue it leaves a lasting impression".

It is better, therefore, to tell anyone plainly that he has wronged rather than taunt him. The Qur'an says:-

يٰـــاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا اتَّقُوْا اللّٰهَ وَقُوْلُوْا قَوْلًا سَدِيْدًا (سورة الاحزاب: ٧٠)

O you who believe! Fear Allah and speak words straight to the point (al-Ahzab. 33:70)

Indirect speech is neither desired nor liked. In the present times, we are used to oblique references and round about approach. The listener is hurt by that. People who speak in this manner gain the appreciation of the masses and are said to possess good sense of humour as an orator.

A Unique Incident Of Oblique Speech

Someone wrote an article in which he commented on one of the books of Maulana Mahmud ul Hasan رحمة الله عليه. while making the comments he called the Maulana an infidel or unbeliever. One of the sincere disciples of the Maulana retaliated by citing a literary persian poem which, by today's standards, was a high-ranking criticism with a taunting bent. The poem was

مرا کافر گر گفتی غمے نیست
چراغ کذب را نبود فروغے
مسلمانت بخوانم در جوابش
دروغے را جزا باشد دروغے

If you call me an infidel, it pains me not,
Because the light of falsehood never kindles.
You have called me an infidel. In answer, I call you a Muslim, Because falsehood can only be repulsed with falsehood.

This means that you have lied by calling me an infidel, so I lie by calling you a Muslim or that 'you are not a Muslim'. A poet or a literary person would applaud such a response because it is a biting literary reply. The second poet starts by calling him a Muslim but he clarifies his

statement when he says that a lie is responded with a like lie. 'You spoke a lie by calling me an infidel so I speak a lie by calling you a Muslim'. When this man presented his poem to the Maulana, he commented, "You have composed an excellent poem but you have turned the table on him and called him an unbeliever which is not our approach. We do not call anyone a disbeliever." So, he did not send the peom to the man who had criticised him.

Then, the Maulana revised that poem and made an addition, too. He wrote

مرا کافر گر گفتی غمے نیست
چراغِ کذب را نبود فروغے
مسلمانت بخوانم در جوابش
دهم شکر بجائے تلخ دوغے
اگر تو مومنی فبِھَا وَ اِلّا
دروغے را جزا باشد دروغے

If you have called me an infidel, it pains me not because the light of falsehood never shines. In answer, I call you a Muslim and instead of the sour dose, I feed you sugar. If you are a believer it is indeed very good. But if you aren't then the recompense of falsehood is always falsehood.

Ponder over it! That man labels him an infidel, so consigns him to Hell. But, the Maulana could not tolerate even a sentence of biting language against that man which would transgress the limits. Such unseemly language would be used here in this world. We will have to account in the Hereafter for the tongue's utterance. "Why had we used such a word for another persons? Therefore,we must exercise care and speak plainly and say exactly what we mean.

An Incident About A biting Tongue.

My respected father, Maulana Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه. used to say that some people have a biting tongue. Such people will always taunt or raise objections. Such behaviour causes heart burns. My father narrated an incident to support his point. A man visited a relative. When he went there he found the daughter-in-law of the house very angry. She was speaking rudely to her mother-in-law who was seated nearby. The man asked the elder woman what had angered her daughter-in-law. She said, "There's nothing, I spoke only two words of reproach and am being punished for that. She is running wild since then and is very angry." The man asked her what it was that she had spoken and she said, "I only said that her father was a slave and her mother was a slave. Since then she is wild with anger." Look at that! Those were only two words according to the elder woman.. But, they were such words as irritate a person. Taunting words ruin families and create hatred among family members. We must keep away from using them. We must always speak clearly and in a straightforward way.

We must think before we speak

Before we speak anything, we must ponder over the consequence and on how the other person would take it. We must also see how these very words we wish to speak to other people would be received by us if they were spoken to us. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has taught us the principle:

أحِبَّ لِلنَّاسِ مَاتُحِبُّ لِنَفْسِكَ(ترمذی، کتاب الزهد، باب من اتقی المحارم فهوا عبدالناس)

"Prefer for other people what you prefer for yourself." (Tirmizi, Book of Az-zahd(piety)

The Prophet ﷺ has put an end to the setting up of two standards, one for ourselves and one for the others. If Allah grows this attitude in our hearts then we will be free of all the bickering and hatred that we see around us.

The tongue is a great Blessing.

The tongue that man has is one of the great blessings of Allah on him. We are enjoying its gratis and it works round the clock from birth to death. We can only understand its value if we imagine ourselves without it. Those who are down with paralysis and cannot speak they try their best but cannot utter a word. They wish to convey their inner feelings to their dear ones but cannot do so and it is then that they realise the value of the tongue. But, we use this blessing of Allah from morning to evening, day in and day out, like a sharp weapon without thinking for a moment what words we utter with it. This is very wong. The correct thing is to weigh out words before we speak. If we do that then instead of being a means to deliver us to Hell, the tongue will take us to Heaven and amass for us a wealth for use in the Hereafter, *Insha Allah.*

Let Us Accustom Ourselves To Think Before We Speak.

We are told in a *Hadith* that it is mainly the tongue that will be responsible for flinging its owner face down into Hell. Therefore, we must think before we speak. This does not mean that a man should wait for some time during which he thinks before saying something but when he accustoms himself to think before speaking then he will do it spontaneously. Allah then makes his tongue value its words before it utters them and it will only utter the correct words, never the wrong ones that displease Allah and hurt

other people.

Maulana Thanavi's Case

There was an attendant of Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanavi رحمة الله عليه. He was called Bhai Niaz. He was a very cossetted servant and even visitors of the Maulana loved him. He made himself felt by exercising authority on visitors to the *khanqah* always giving instructions and he was aided in this behaviour by the strict system that ruled the *khanqah*. One of his disciples complained to the Maulana about this man's behaviour and told him that he was a rude man who scolds many visitors. The Maulana did not like that so he summoned Bhai Niaz and reproached him for his rude behaviour and wished to know why he did that. In answer, Bhai Niaz said, "Maulana, fear Allah. Don't lie!". He was not addressing these words to Maulana Thanavi but he had meant to refer to those who had brought about the complaint. They should fear Allah and not lie. On hearing him, the Maulana lowered his head and went away from there saying, "*Astaghfir-Allah* (I seek Allah's forgiveness.)" Those who saw this happen were surprised that a menial could speak in this manner to the Maulana who instead of taking him to task for that went away saying *Astaghfir Allah*. Later on, the Mawalana explained that he had erred in scolding Bhai Niaz without first giving him an opportunity to explain and that is why he had said *Astaghfir Allah*. The *Shari'ah* directs us to allow the accused to defend himself. The truth is that when Allah gives someone the power to recognise truth from falsehood he takes care not to exceed the limits. May Allah give us also such an understanding! *Aameen.*

It Is Not Proper To Hurt A Non-Muslim Too

Some people suppose that this *Hadith* excludes the non-Muslims from its application because it defines a Muslim as one who does not hurt another Muslim with his tongue or hand. They contend that the *Hadith* does not disallow us to hurt a non-Muslim. They are mistaken in thinking so. Muslims are mentioned in the *Hadith* because generally they live in a Muslim surrounding and have to deal with each other, otherwise the scope of the *Hadith* extends equally to Muslims and non-Muslims.It is not allowed to cause inconvenience to a non-Muslim too in times of peace. Nevertheless, when Muslims are at war with the infidels then it is a part of the activity to hurt them in pursuance of the objective to diminish their status; but it is not allowed to hurt those unbelievers who are not engaged in war with the Muslims.

Evidence In Support Of This Statement.

We find evidence to support our contention in the case of Hazrat Musa عليه السلام who lived under the rule of the Pharoah in Egypt where everyone was a disbeliever except Hazrat Musa عليه السلام. It happend that an Isra'ili and a Qubti (copt) were engaged in quarrel. Hazrat Musa عليه السلام slapped the Qubti who died because of it. Although the man was an unbeliever, Hazrat Musa عليه السلام considered himself a sinner because he had inadvertantly brought about his death.

وَلَهُمْ عَلَـيَّ ذَنْبٌ فَاَخَافُ اَنْ يَّقْتُلُوْنِ (سورة الشعراء ١٤)

And they have a crime against me; so I fear they will slay me.(ash-Shu'ara, 26:14)

Hazrat Musa عليه السلام considered the inadvertant killing of the unbeliever to be a sin. The question arises that the man was an unbeliever and slaying the unbelievers is an act

of *Jihad*; then why did Hazrat Musa عليه السلام call it a sin and sought the forgiveness of Allah for that? The answer is that although the Qubti was a non-Muslim, in times of peace when Muslims and non-Muslims live together the rights enjoyed by Muslims and non-Muslims are similar so that just as it is wrong to hurt a Muslim so too it is wrong to hurt an unbeliever. It pertains to human rights and the first duty of a man is that he acts like a human being and thereafter he many become a Muslim and a Sufi. It is part of human behaviour that he refrains from causing inconvenience to anyone else without distinction of Muslims and non-Muslims.

To Retract On A Promise Is Like Hurting The Other Person With The Tongue.

There are certain things that are the same as hurting with the tongue but some people do not consider them in this way. An example is to go back on one's promise. If anybody assures another person that he will be with him at a certain time or do a certain task for him at the agreed time and then fails to do it then that person to whom the promise was made faces difficulty. The man who had given out the assurance commits the sin of failing to keep his promise and also the sin of causing inconvenience to the other man. This is a form of hurting someone with the tongue.

Greetings while the Qur'an is Recited.

Sometimes, we do not realise that we are hurting someone with our tongue. We suppose that we are being virtuous but actually we are being sinful because our behaviour is causing difficulty to someone else. For instance, to greet another person with *as-salamu-'alay-kum* is an excellent thing and rewarding too. But, *Shari'ah* has

seen to it that when others are liable to be inconvenienced, the greetings must not be exchanged; it has given instructions on this matter. In fact, on some occasions instead of being rewarding it is sinful to offer greetings to another person. If a man is reciting the Qur'an then he must not be saluted. The salutation will interrupt him and he will have to stop the recital and turn towards the person greeting him which is an inconvenience to him. So, the greeting causes him difficulty with the tongue. In the same way, it is not allowed to salute those already sitting in the mosque because they are remembering Allah. and are engaged in devotional exercises. They have the name of Allah on their lips and they will be disturbed if anybody salutes them.

Greetings When A Meeting Is In Progress.

The jurists opine that when someone speaks to other people who listen to him attentively then a new-comer must not salute them even if they are talking about worldly matters. Those people were attentive to the speaker and their attention would be diverted if anyone interrupts them with the salutation. The interruption would be in bad taste. Thus, we are commanded that when we go to an Assembly and the proceedings are on then we must sit down quietly without offering the *salams*. A salutation at that time will be like hurting them with the tongue. It may be guaged from this principle how very particular *Shari'ah* is in forbidding us from inconveniencing other people.

Salutations To One Who Is Eating

Although it is not disallowed to salute a person who is eating his food, it is certainly a disliked behaviour to do so if that person is likely to be inconvenienced. That person is not engaged in worship but only eating his food

so if anyone salutes him, the mountains will not fall down on him. However, there is a possibility of being disturbed and feeling bad when someone salutes at such a time. In the same way, if someone is seen to hurry along somewhere, it is not correct for us to salute him and extend the hand for a handshake. One must understand by the way he was walking he must be in a hurry. It was not a proper time to salute him and shake hands with him. He should have been allowed to go where he was going. The salutation at such times is like hurting other people.

Prolonging Conversation On The Phone.

My respected father رحمة الله عليه used to say that telephone is also an instrument through which other people may be harmed. Rather, it is a tool that may be used to create unlimited hardships to other people. Thus, if anyone rings another person and engages him in a long conversation without even considering that he might have been busy in some other task then he is causing him inconvenience. My father, Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه has commented in the Ma'ariful Qur'an that before the caller engages in a long conversation he must let the called person know his intention and ask him if he has that much time or should he call later. He, رحمة الله عليه has said that this is part of etiquettes of telephonic converstation, and he has defined the long conversation as spanning over five minutes! This is mentioned in the interpretation of *surah an-Nur* and my father was very particular in observing it.

Use of Loudspeakers

Another example of causing hardship by the tongue is the misuse of the loudspeaker in the mosque. If a few people are to be addressed within the mosque perhaps the internal

loudspeaker would suffice. But, if the external loudspeaker is also used then the entire neighbourhood is compelled to listen to the address., Some of these people may be reciting the Qur'an or occupied in other tasks or resting. Someone may be ill, they are all subjected to hardship by the tongue.

An Incident Of The Times Of Hazrat Umar رضی الله عنه

In the times of Hazrat Umar Faruq Sayyidna someone used to come to the Masjid Nabavi and deliver sermons. The abode of Hazrat Aishah رضی الله عنها was just next to the Masjid Nabavi. Although there were no loudspeakers in those days yet this man's voice was loud and could be heard by Hazrat Aishah رضی الله عنها in her room while she was occupied in different household chores or some form of worship like the recital of the Qur'an. She sent a message to Hazrat Umar رضی الله عنه that this person delivered sermons near her house in a loud voice which disturbed her. She requested that this man may be asked to deliver his sermons elsewhere or subdue his voice. Hazrat Umar رضی الله عنه summoned the man and explained to him that his behaviour annoyed the Mother of the faithful, Hazrat Aishah رضی الله عنها so he must discontinue his preaching there. That man obeyed and discontinued his preaching for some days. After a few days, however, he again continued his sermons. When Hazrat Umar رضی الله عنه was informed of that, he summoned him again and warned him that if he did not cease he would smash his rod on him. That is, he would beat him with the rod until it broke up.

Our Behaviour Today

If we look at our behaviour today we have set aside these principles. If someone is delivering an address in the mosque, he torments the locality around him. The loudspeaker blares at full volume and nobody in the eighbourhood is allowed to sleep or rest. If anyone asks them to lower the volume, they taunt him that he is preventing religious effort although it is the speaker in the mosque and the responsible men there who violate the principles of *Shari'ah.* They are responsible for the hardship other people suffer. The truth is that it is part of the etiquette of a religious scholar ('Alim) that he keeps his voice only that high as his audience can listen to him.

ينبغى للعالم ان لايعد وصوته مجلسه

The voice of an Alim must not go beyond his listeners.

Violation of these principles amounts to causing hardship with the tongue. Allah has blessed us with this tongue that we may remember Allah with it, we may convey the truth and we may soothe the hearts of other people but not that we may hurt them.

A Woman Of Hell

A *Hadith* tells us that the Prophet ﷺ was asked about a woman who fasted during the days and kept vigil in the night but she was rude to her neighbours. The Prophet ﷺ said that the woman would go to Hell. Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه says in explanation of the *Hadith* "People must not be put to difficulty unnecessarily and this is more important than individul worship." That is, fair dealing with other people takes precedence over worship. Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه then says that the question of mutual dealings has been

shelved these days and no one even tries to explain what it means and what we are required to do in this regard.

Causing Hardship With The Hand.

The second thing that the *Hadith* under discussion calls for is to refrain from hurting anyone with the hand. Sometimes it is very obvious that we are putting someone to hardship, for example when we beat him. But sometimes we put him to hardship but our society does not think of that in those terms, although there are so many ways in which we may cause hardship to another person. By mentioning the hand, the *Hadith* includes all the deeds performed by man because he performs most of them by his hand. The Ulama include all the deeds performed by man whether he uses his hands for that or not.

To Put Something Out Of Place

We can give the example of people living together. There are many things of common use, for instance towel, utensils, soap and so on. If one member uses any of these things and then does not replace it at its proper place, the others are inconvenienced when they have to look for it here and there. The first peson is responsible for the inconvenience and it is a hardship to which the others are put which the *Hadith* forbids us to do.

A Grave Sin.

My father taught us even those things which we consider trifle. When we were young we too would commit such mistakes. We would use something and then misplace it and, not finding it at its proper place, he would have to search for it. He told us once that apart from being bad manners, it was a grave sin not to put something back at its

proper place after use. This misdeed causes inconvenience to a Muslim and it is a grave sin to do that. Before that we had not known that it was a grave sin to put anything at a wrong place. This was an example of hurting anyone with the hand.

Causing Hardship To Family and & Relatives

It must be understood that the foregoing does not presuppose that those with whom we live together are strangers alone. They could be our family members and relatives too. Generaly, we do not feel that we are causing hardship to our close relatives like wife, children, brothers and sisters; some people say that it does not matter if these relatives suffer hardship because they are relatives, after all. This is a wrong approach. It is not the fault of those people that they are our relatives that we cause them hardship. We must remember that our beloved Prophet ﷺ woke up for *Tahajjud Salat* and was very quiet in eveything that he did lest he distrurb Hazrat Aishah رضی اللہ عنہا in her sleep. So, just as we are forbidden to cause hardship to strangers so too we must not cause hardship to the folk of our homes and our relatives.

To Stay away At The Times Of Meals

For instance, it is a grave sin for a man to be away from home at the times of meal after assuring his family members that he will be there and have his meal with them so they are kept waiting and wondering where he is. It often happens that such a man does not worry about his family members or his coommitment and eats out while they wait for him. He is committing a grave sin in this manner because he hurts someone whom Allah has joined

to him in marital relations. Such a man must inform his family members if he is delayed so that they are at rest concerning him. But people do not think of it from this angle because a wife is supposed to be a subordinate and she may be put to inconvenience, although it is wrong and forbidden, and a grave sin to do so.

It Is Forbidden To Dirty The Thoroughfare

Another example of hurting someone by the hand is to throw something on a thoroughfare, a banana peel or any dirty thing. The passers-by will suffer because of that or someone may slip and fall down when he puts his foot on it. The person who is responsible for that will be answerable on the Day of Resurrection for his misdeed. Even if no passer-by is inconvenienced yet because of dirtying the thoroughfare the person throwing it will have committed a sin. We are told about the Holy Prophet ﷺ that whenever he was travelling and felt the urge to urinate, he would search for a proper place to do it in the same manner one looks out for a place to build his house. He did this to avoid dirtying a pathway and thus causing the passers-by an inconvenience. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said, "Faith has over seventy branches, the most excellent of these is to declare the *kalimah*

لا الٰــه الاالله محمـــــــد رســـول الله

There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.

And the humblest form is to remove offensive and injurious things from the thoroughfare." These things could be a thorn or a peel and their removal is the most minor form of faith. Thus when removal of injurious things from the road is a branch of faith the throwing of such things on

the road could be a branch of disbelief.

It Is Forbidden To Cause Mental Agony To Any one

Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه has said that the *Hadith* under discussion refers to actions of the tongue and hand but it also includes any action by the tongue or hand that causes someone else a mental agony. For instance, if a man borrows money from someone and promises to return it at a certain date then he must return it by that day. If he cannot repay the sum borrowed on the promised day then he must request for more time but he must not try to fool the lender and cause him mental torture. Let not the lender keep waiting for the debtor to make an appearance so that the poor fellow cannot make a proper planning bacause he does not know when he will get back his money.

Agonising One's Servants

Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه goes so far as to say that a person must not atonce ask his servant to do more than one task in sequence. In this way, the master frees himself of remembering the tasks but shifts the responsibility of remembering them on his servant. If it is not necesary to do so then the servant must not be burdened with the responsibility to remember. He must be asked to finish a task and when he is through, he should be given the next task, and so on in this manner. The Maulana said about himself that he always followed this method. After his servant finished one task, he instructed him to do the other and then the next. The Maulana said, "I remember the duties my servant has to be instructed with and I do not shift the burden to his memory. He is thus not under a mental pressure. He knows that when he has completed one

assignment, I will instruct him with the next." The Maulana رحمة الله عليه was a far-sighted man.

Where Should One Wait for a Worshipper Engaged In *Salat*

Continuing with examples of how one does inconvenience other people, we may cite the case of a man waiting for another who is offering his *Salat*. Such a man must not sit next to the worshipper so that he senses that the man is waiting for him and his attention is diverted into hurrying through the *Salat*. The worshipper feels he must not keep the man waiting so hurries through the postures of prayer. The proper thing for the man who is waiting is to wait at some distance so that the worshipper is not disturbed and offers his *Salat* peacefully. He may meet him after he finishes his *Salat* without knowing that someone was waiting for him. The first method of sitting next to the worshipper making him realise that someone waits for him is wrong. It causes him mental agony. *Al Hamdulillah*, our elders and teachers applied themselves equally to all branches of religion. They did not take up one or two branches and exclude the rest. the Qur'an says

يٰـٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا ادْخُلُوْا فِي السِّلْمِ كَآفَّةً (سورة البقرة: ٢٠٨)

O you who believe! Enter completely into Islam (al Baqarah. 2:208)

Let it not be that you, O Believers! pay attention to the branch of worship like *Salat*, *Fasting* and so on, but by-pass social conduct, fair dealing and good manners as prescribed in Islam.

Adab ul Mu'ashirat

Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه has composed a small book in Urdu by the name of *Adabul Mu'ashirat*. It is worth reading. The Maulana رحمة الله عليه has stated in the book that he could not write down all the social etiquettes in the book but he has nevertheless collected there in as many as he could recollect. He has suggested that the reader would read the book and go on behaving as the book wants him to behave and gaining knowledge of all the social etiquettes as prescribed by Islam. Allah will open up his mind for him. Thus it is a part of social manners that a man may park his car in such a way that no one else is obstructed; it is also part of religion. We have forgotten these things today and are, therefore, sinful. At the same time we present a wrong picture of religion. Anyone looking at us would say that we are regular at *Salat* but careless in cleanliness and quick at causing hardship to other people. We must try to think what picture of Islam our behaviour presents to a non-Muslim, would he be attracted to it after observing us? Or, would he be repelled? May Allah guide us! Instead of behaving as good specimens of Muslims, and inviting other people to Islam by our conduct, we have become instrumental in turning them away from Islam. We have paid scant attention to the branch of social manners.

May Allah cause us not to be neglectful in this regard–myself and everyone else. May He inspire us to comprehend correctly and to conduct ourselves fairly on all branches of religion.*Aameen*

And our concluding prayer is: "Praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds!."

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Series: 74

FEAR OF ALLAH FIGHTS OFF SINS IN MAN

DARUL ISHAAT URDU BAZAR KARACHI-1

Venue	:	Jame'masjid Baitul-Mukarram, Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Karachi.
Date	:	22th September, 1995

FEAR OF ALLAH FIGHTS OFF SINS IN MAN

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهد ان سيدنا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطن الرجيم بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

وَلِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهٖ جَنَّتٰنِ (سورة الرحمن: ٤٦)

All praise belongs to Allah. We praise Him, beseech Him for help and seek His forgiveness. We believe in Him and trust in Him. We seek refuge in Allah from the mischief of our souls and from our evil deeds. He whom Allah guides none can mislead and

whom He leaves to stray none can guide. And, we bear witness that there is no god except Allah who is Alone and has no partner, and we bear witness that Hazrat Muhammad is His Slave and His Messenger- May Allah bless him and his family and Companions. And may He favour him and give him peace, complete peace.

I seek refuge in Allah from the cursed devil. In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. And for him who fears the standing before his Lord, there shall be two gardens. (ar-Rahman. 55:46)

Assurance Of Two Gardens

As for the person who fears to stand before his Lord, and fears that one day he will have to stand before Him and account for each of his deeds, there will be two *Jannahs* for him. *Jannah* is Paradise or Garden (of Paradise).

In explanation of this verse, the well-known successor of the Companions Hazrat Mujahid رحمة الله عليه says that the verse refers to that person who gets an evil suggestion and intends to commit a sin but at the same time he thinks of Allah and remembers that he will stand before Allah one day so he gives up the idea and abandons the sinful thought. It is for such a person that the assurance is held out for two gardens in Paradise.

It Is *Taqwa* (Fear of Allah)

He then explains it in detail. A man is all alone and nobody is there to see him so there is no apparent obstacle to prevent him from committing a sin. It is there, in the loneliness, that he feels like doing a sinful act. But he tells

himself, "although no man can know what I do but my Allah sees me. One day, I will stand before Him." He then abstains from the act. It is for this man that the two Gardens are promised, and for those like him. The behaviour of this man is called *Taqwa* (piety, righteousness, God-fearing). *Taqwa* is defined as "the awe of Allah that prompts man to abandon the most pressing demand of his base desire to sin." He thinks that although no one watches him the One Who sees all sees him too. The aim of all pious teachings and of *Shari'ah* is to grow in man the fear that he will have to stand before Allah.

The Graeatness Of Allah

Allah does not tell us in this verse that one should fear Hell, or the chastisement, or the Fire, but, He has said that he should fear the standing before his Lord.

In other words, he should recognise the greatness, the majesty of Allah and he should realise that Allah may or may not punish him against the sin. But, the real question is how would he stand before Him with the sin against his name? If anyone recognises the greatness of someone and esteems and respects him then, even if he knows that he will not punish him, he stands in awe of Him and will not do anything against his wishes lest he have to face Him after doing the wrong. This is *taqwa* when the attitude is in relation to Allah.

My Respect For My Father

Except for a couple of times, my father Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه never raised his hands over me. I remember he slapped me once or twice but I held him in such respect and awe that I would tremble when I passed near his room. Why was that? That was because of the

fear that he might come to know of my deeds that would displease him. When a man can fear another creature in this manner then it is imperative that he fears and esteems the Creator of the Universe. He must fear and ask himself how he would stand before Him with the record of deeds marking his evils and sins. The verse of the Qur'an tells us about this very thing:

وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ وَنَهَى النَّفْسَ عَنِ الْهَوٰى (النازعات: ٤٠)

(But as for him who feared the standing before his Lord and restrained (his) soul from caprices.) (an-Naziat, 79: 40)

The Thing To Fear Is The Wrath of Allah

Hell and Chastisement are feared because they are signs of the punishment of Allah otherwise we should really fear and esteem the grandness and the majesty of Allah Himself. He Himself is to be feared actually.

There is an Arabic poem.

لا تسقنى ماءَ الْحياة بذِلّة

بل فاسقنى بالعزّ كأس الحنظل

The meaning is:

Do not give me to drink the water of life while you debase me, but you may give me the bitter juice of the colocynth while you honour me.

Those people who have understood the Reality of Allah crave for His pleasure and keep away from His displeasure. So, they fear Hell and chastisement because they represent His displeasure which itself is really feared.

An Incident Of Mixing Water Into Milk

It is said about Hazrat Umar Faruq رضی الله عنه that as a Caliph, he made rounds of the city at night to learn about the problems of his people. He helped the poor and needy and aided the grief-sticken. If he came across anyone doing something wrong, he reformed that person. One night, he was on his usual rounds at the time of *Tahajjud*, he heard two women in a house speak to each other and he pictured that one of them was an old woman while the other was young. The former said to the latter who was her daughter, "Mix some water into the milk to increase the quantity before we sell it." The young woman said, "Mother, the Commander of Faithful, Umar Faruq, has prohibited every milk-seller from doing so. We must not do it." "The Amir ul Muminin is not here. He cannot see you. No one can see you in this hour of the night if you put some water into the milk." The young woman replied, "Mother! It may be true that the Amir ul Muminin does not watch us but what about his Lord. Is He not watching us? We must not do the wrong thing." Hazrat Umar Faruq رضی الله عنه heard all they had spoken and in the morning enquired about them. Then he sent a proposal of marriage of his son for the young woman and Abdullah bin Umar رضی الله عنه was married to her. His grandson, Umar Bin Abdul Aziz رحمة الله عليه was born from this family and became the fifth Caliph. Returning to the story, the girl was convinced in her heart that even though the Commander of the Faithful did not see, Allah does see everything whether one was all alone and it was pitch dark or not. This behaviour is known as *Taqwa.*

A Lesson-giving Event

Once Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ was travelling soewhere and on the way he exhausted his provision but he spied sheep grazing nearby. The Arabs were known for their hospitality to travellers whom they fed goat's milk free of charge, Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ approached the shephered and told him that he was a traveller and hungry and would like him to provide him milk of one of his flock. The shephered explained that he was not the owner of the sheep but an employee of the real owner who was not there so he could not oblige. This was a proper *Shari'ah* procedure. Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ then tried him out. He said, "I will show you something profitable that will benefit both of us. You sell me one of these sheep. You can keep the price I pay and will get the sheep and also its milk. You can tell its owner that a wolf gobbled it up. He will believe you because he knows there are wolves in the jungle. "The shephered was prompt with his reply يا هذا! فاين الله؟ {"O Man! Then where is Allah?} He meant to say that he could fool his employer, the owner of the sheep. But, there is the Owner of his master to cope with. "How will I fare with him?" and he added that he was not willing to be an accomplice in the deal. When he heard the answer, Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ said, "As long as people like you live on this earth, no tyrant can oppress anyone." Thus, till so far as hearts fear Allah, people think of the Hereafter and fear the standing before Allah crimes and oppressions cannot go on. This too was an example of *Taqwa*.

The Best Way To Eradicate Crime

We must realise that unless we develop this way of thinking we cannot hope to eradicate crime or fraudulent conduct. We may call the police to help us but the, most any

security and check can do for us is to work in day time and in cities only but they will be ineffective at night and in lonely remote places when only one thing can do it. It is the fear of Allah. Nothing else can eradicate crime and evil. When men do not have the fear of Allah in their hearts then their society plunges to lowest depths. We can observe that happening today. There is a police force and another one over it, and there are control centres and departments, one over the other. Laws are being enacted but nothing is happening. The law courts are functioning, the police force is active and the anti-corruption cell is at work. Much money goes into creating and maintaining these cells and forces but, on the other side, there is corruption at its peak so those who are there to stop it are corrupt themselves. How many of these checks and counter-checks will be applied? There is always a loophole in the law or a way out is always found out. So far, no one has discovered a method to stop cirme completely but awe and fear of Allah together with the Hereafter in mind is the only way to eradicate crime and oppression.

The *Taqwa* Of the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم

It was this behaviour that the Holly Prophet ﷺ had grown in his noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم. The result was that if anyone happened to commit a wrong, he would become restless and would not be peaceful until he had the prescribed *Shari'ah* punishment applied to him and until he had sought forgiveness of Allah sincerely and repented to Him. The wrong-doer would approach the Holy Prophet ﷺ and ask him to sentence him and get the mark erased from him. Therefore, only fear of Allah in the hearts, and the thought of the Hereafter and the presence before Allah can wipe out crime from the world. Every other plan will fail.

Proceedings In Our Courts

I have been associated with the courts for many years. The procedure is that cases of theft and robbery should come to us finally in appeal. But, during the first three years we did not hear any case of theft or robbery. I was suprised. I investigated the matter and learnt that during the time only three or four appeals were filed. I exclaimed that anyone who goes by these statistics will think that we live in a peaceful society full of Angels.Only three or four cases of theft and banditry were brought to the Supreme court in three years! But if the same man reads our newspapers, he will find that innumerable thefts and dacoities are committed every day. When I probed further, I learnt that all such cases are settled in the lower courts and there is no reason to take them to the higher courts.

An Eye-opening Event

After I had been in court for three years, I received a case. Someone had arrived from Kuwait and had hired a taxi from the airport to his home and he had his luggage with him. At the Bahdurabad roundabout in Karachi a police posse stopped the taxi and after learning that the passenger had arrived from Kuwait appropriated his entire luggage at gun-point. This was the first case I received for hearing in which the police that are deputed to wipe out theft and banditry themselves used the official gun to snatch the property of other people. The custodians of law and guardians of peace and security were responsible for committing crime and disturbing peace and security. The only reason for it is that the fear of Allah no more finds a place in our hearts. We have forgotten that we will have to stand before Allah. We do not remind ourselves that we

have to die and will be brought to life again. The result is that we are overtaken by murder and killing, lawlessness and restlessness.

How The Devil Works

We do not come to behave in this manner all of a sudden. Rather, we do it gradually. The devil does not prompt anyone to commit a grave sin at once. No man will do that if he prompts him to do it. For instance, the devil will not whisper to anyone straightaway that he should commit robbery because the man will not agree to do it in that way. The devil first gets him to do small things. For instance, he gets a man to ogle at women in the beginning. Gradully, the devil gets him to commit graver sins. When man becomes a habitual sinner, the devil reminds him that he did not think of Allah when he committed sins in the past. So he may commit a grave sin too again. In this manner, he gets him to do a grave sin and the man becomes a criminal.

Television Spoils Our Youth

We see young people carrying about pistol. At pistol point they loot someone, kill someone or dishonour someone. Did anyone do that before? Never! Young boys were first invited to watch the television on the pleas that it was watched the world over. They were shown films and this led to graver sin. These boys were gradually brain washed. Then they became bolder and forgot Allah and the standing before Him when they committed a sin. This led themfurther into the labyrinth of crime and sin.

Minor sins Lead To Graver sins

It is always the minor sins that lead man to the major ones. The Devil makes man commit the minor sins. When he commits them regularly, he becomes bold and then dares to commit the major ones. Our youth think that they will live forever, they will never be called upon to account for their actions and they may commit the gravest of sins because the door is open for them. There is an Arabic verse

> الشر يبدأه في الاصل اصغره
>
> Evil always commences from minor, insignificant evils.

Therefore, let not anyone do any wrong howsoever minor, thinking it to be insignificant and of no consequence. In reality, that is the devil's net in which he entangles the sinner and then gains control over him. Thereby, he removes from the sinner fear of Allah and the Hereafter. Because of that, we must shun all sin-major or minor-fearing Allah, all the time.

Is a sin minor or major?

Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanavi رحمة الله عليه has said that many people ask with much interest, "Is that sin minor or major?" They ask because if the sin is minor they may go ahead and commit it; if it is major, they will feel some fear in doing it.The respected Maulana used to say that the two things are like a spark and a live coal. Is anyone ever known to have placed a spark in a case because it was a mere spark that would not do any harm? No sane person would do it. That spark would turn into a fire inside the case and burn everything inside and then the case itself. The fire may then engulf the suroundings. It is the same thing with a sin-minor or major, it is a spark. If a man

wilfully commits a sin, it might devour all that the man had built up (of pious deeds). Therefore, let us not enquire whether a sin is major or minor. Let us see if any act is sinful or not, a deed is allowed or disallowed. Let us ask whether Allah has permitted us to do something or not. Once we know that Allah has disallowed something then we must remember also that we will have to stand before Him and account for our deeds. In this way we can be like those who are described in the verse of the Qur'an quoted above from *Surah an-Nazi'at* by remembering that Allah is there even when we are tempted and thus we may ward off the temptation.

Or, This Is What We Must Remember When Tempted

Maulana Doctor Abdul Hayy رحمة الله عليه used to say that often man does not imagine Allah when he thinks of Him as watching over him. This is because he has never seen Him and one can only picture that which he has already seen. The Maulana رحمة الله عليه suggested that when anyone is tempted to commit a sin, he must imagine that his father is watching him or that his children are present and seeing what he does, or he must think about his teacher or mentor. He may think of anyone else: his students, his friends. He may ask himself, "Would I do it if one of these is watching?

Maulana Doctor Albdul Hayy رحمة الله عليه asked "Suppose you are tempted to cast a wrong glance. At that moment just picture that your Shaikh is watching you. Or, your father; or, your children. Will you then glance in the forbidden manner? Of course not! Because if one of them catches you in the act, he will think of you as naughty. You will automatically cease to cast the wrong glance.

Thus, if you can desist from wrong-doing from fear of an ordinary creature, you should think that Allah, the Creator and Master of all, the King of Kings is watching. If you think that way everytime you are tempted then you will feel obstructed from committing sin.

Sweetness Of Sin Is Fleeting

When a man is accustomed to sin then, if he tries to, he will find it difficult to give up the habit initially. But that is the right time and he must force himself to give up the sinful habit. He should stiffle the desire to sin for the sake of Allah and once he does it for the sake of Allah, He will give him such a sweet taste of faith and belief that he will come to find sin a distasteful experience. May Allah grant all of us the sweetness that preserves us from sinful activity *Aameen.*

Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi رحمة الله عليه used to compare the enjoyment derived from sin to the persistent urge of an itchy person to scratch. He goes on scratching and derives pleasure from it. But, that pleasure is unhealthy. He will get little wounds on his skin which would pain and burn and so undo the pleasure he had derived from itching. Now, if he had refrained from scratching and told himself that it was better for him, and if he had applied an ointment instead, and taken the unpleasant medicine, then he would have saved himself from the after-effects. So, he realises that soundness of health is preferable to the enjoyment derived from itching. In the same way enjoyment derived from sin is misleading and unreal. Let us surrender it for the sake of Allah. Instead, we may choose *taqwa.* We will realise then how far Allah elevates our ranks. The base desires have been created for the sole reason that we smother them and obtain thereby the pleasure of Allah. May Allah by His Mercy cause us to realise the truth. *Aameen.*

Let the Youth Fear And The Aged Hope

It is a Believer's distinguishing mark that he fears Allah and at the same time places his hopes in Him. But, our elders have stated that it is better to overcome with fear of Allah in the youthful stages. This is because at that age a person is healthy, he is active in his movement and strong and he can do everything he wishes to do. He also is tempted easily and often, finds greater opportunities to sin and a greater urge too. So, it is more proper that he grows a fear of Allah at this age as it will preserve him from sinning. As for one who has attained old age, it is advisable that he hopes for the mercy of Allah in an intensified manner so that he does not despair.

Life Is Regulated By Fear

Some people argue that it is not necessary to develop the fear of Allah. They claim, "Allah is ours. Why fear Him? He is the One who creatred us and He says again and again in the Qur'an that 'He is Forgiving, Merciful.' Then why should we fear Him." If this is the way people think, how may we expect them to develop fear of Allah. It is the result of this sort of thinking that people live a carefree life, unmindful of the fear of Allah and deeply involved in sin. But,. the truth is that if there is no fear in the mind none of the tasks of this life can be accomplished, no affair can progress. If a student does not fear failure in examinations, he will not study. It is the fear that inspires to prepare and study. If an employee does not fear dismissal he will be derelict in the performance of his official duties, he would warm his chair doing nothing or look to his personal affairs. If a son does not fear his father, a subordinate does not fear his officer, people do not fear the law then there would be anarchy and lawlessness. Everyone's rights would be

violated. Today, we find ourselves in an unruly atmosphere, no one is safe, life and property are insecure and meaningless, daylight robberies are committed. Man is worthless even in comparison with small insects. This is because we do not have the fear of Allah and we do not fear the law or authority. Money can buy law so anyone who is prepared to pay is above law. The result is lawlessness.

The Freedom Movement

In the Indian sub-continent, when the British ruled over it, Muslims and Hindus collaborated to drive them out of India, and launched a joint movement holding demonstrations and public meetings and calling for strikes. Sometimes the Muslims were asked to behave as Hindus and sometimes it was difficult to distinguish a Muslim from a Hindu. For instance, during the protest demonstrations, Muslims also marked their forehead in the Hindu fashion and went to their temples and took part in their rites. Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه did not like the manner in which the Movement progressed and not only did he not take part in the movement but he also advised his acquaintances and disciples against it.

The Red Cap Fear

At one time during the movement, a delegation of its leaders visited Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه to convince him to cooperate with them. He told them plainly that he was not in agreement with the way the movement was going on when they suggested that if he joined and supported it the British would soon be driven out. He also asked them what they had achieved in the past few years during which they had held demonstrations, organised public meetings and called for strikes? One of them remarked that although

they had not gained independence they had succeeded in removing fear of the *Red Cap* from the minds of the people. The police then used to don the red cap and were known by it. "No one now fears the police. There was a time when on seeing the police the entire locality trembled with fear. This is a great success and soon we will drive the British out, too."

Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه told them that they had done a very bad thing by removing fear of the police from the minds of the people. He said, "By removing fear of the *red cap* you have given freedom to thieves and bandits. They will do the bad things without fear of the police. The least you could have done when you removed the fear of the *red cap* was to instill the fear of your *green cap* in the minds of the people. That would have been a great success. But, you have removed the fear of authoritry without replacing it with another fear with the result that society will face lawlessness and restlessness. People will be in constant danger of losing their lives, property and honour. You have not done a good thing and I do not praise you for that."

No Longer was there any Fear

These words were spoken by Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه about sixty years ago. We can see today that there is no longer fear of authority in the minds of the people and the consequences are apparent in the raging chaos and disorder our society goes through. It was seen in those times that if a murder took place in a locality, the entire country shook with the news and everyone called for an investigation into the murder. But, today, with our minds without fear, human lives are not even as worthy as mosquitoes and flies.

Instill Fear Of Allah

It is fear on which depends the conduct of the world. Without it there will be disorder, lack of peace, and terrorism. The Qur'an says frequently; adopt *taqwa,* be God-fearing, *fear Allah* - and as a consequence, refrain from disobedience. Just as the affairs of the world cannot be conducted without fear, so also religion depends on fear of Allah. If there is no fear or not much fear- then we will experience a sinful society: one which we find ourselves in today. The Qur'an tells us of Paradise, warns us of Hell and threatens us with its punishment. It describes the majesty and greatness of Allah and His powers so that Muslims think of it and ponder over it and implant in themselves the Fear of Allah.

Fearing Allah In Solitude

Fear of police, the law, the government or of imprisonment is one that bars a person from misbehaving in the presence of other people. But, when a man fears Allah then even if he is alone in the wilderness or in the dark of the night, he will not commit a sin- although there is no one else to see him. When a Believer in such circumstances keeps himself away from sin then there is nothing else apart from the fear of Allah that stops him from it.

Fear Of Allah When *Fasting*

We have the example of fear of Allah in these days too. A man may be a great sinner but if he Fasts in the month of Ramadan then inspite of a terrible thirst from severe heat and being all alone in his room he will not drink water. A person may have the water available to him while he is tempted to have a drink in private but in

today's times too we will not find a Muslim who gives in to it and secretly has a glass of water. If he drinks water no one will ever know that he has cheated but he will not drink it.

What was it that stopped him from drinking water in private and continuing to pretend that he was Fasting? It was the fear of Allah in his mind. We are accustomed to Fasting and it is the habit that instills in us fear of Allah.

Let Us Be Fearful At All Times

Shari'ah calls on us to extend the fear of Allah to every department of life just as we apply it during Fasting. Thus, if we are tempted to cast a wrong glance, fear of Allah. must prevent us from doing so. We must do the same thing when we are tempted to backbite or tell lies. When fear of Allah is imbibed in us then we will never disobey Allah and it is this behaviour that *Shari'ah* wants us to develop.

Who will get Paradise?

The Holy Qur'an says:

وَاَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهٖ وَنَهَى النَّفْسَ عَنِ الْهَوٰى ۙ o فَاِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ هِيَ الْمَاْوٰى (سوره النازعات: ٤٠، ٤١)

But as for him who feared the standing before his Lord and restrained (his) soul from caprices, surely the Garden shall be his abode. (an Nazi'at. 79:40-41)

These are wonderful words. They are about the man who understands that he will one day stand before his Lord and asks himself how he will face Him, and his fear is so severe that he restrains himself from pursuing his base desires. Such a man will have his abode in Paradise that is prepared for such people alone.

Paradise Is Surrounded By Difficulties

A *Hadith* tells us that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

ان الجنة خفت بالمكاره

Surely, Paradise is surrounded by hardship. (*Muslim*)

That is, things that a man does not like surround Paradise–things that call for toil and hardship. He has to overcome them to attain Paradise. That is why man is asked to instill fear of Allah in such a manner that he is prevented from doing the prohibited things. When he keeps away from them then he is assured of Paradise. The awe and fear should be to such an extent that whatever a man says or does he is fearful lest he says or do anything that displeases his Master, his Creator. Nothing he does or says is against the wishes of Allah. The Companions رضی الله عنهم feared Allah to such a degree that they were restless until they presented themselves before the Holy Prophet ﷺ and asked him to pass a sentence over them for their wrong.

Seeking Forgiveness After Worship

As the degree of fear progresses, man does not merely fear the committing of sin but he also fears that his worship might not be upto the mark. He may not have put in enough effort in his act to bring it to the standard approved by Allah. In other words, a man does something to please Allah but fears that he may leave something out of it or perform it in a way that displeases Allah. Our righteous predecessors have advised us that man must carry on being pious and righteous but continue to fear Allah. The Qur'an has said:

تَتَجَافٰى جُنُوْبُهُمْ عَنِ الْمَضَاجِعِ يَدْعُوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ خَوْفًا وَّطَمْعًا......

(السجده:١٦)

Their sides forsake their beds as they call on their Lord in fear and in hope (as-Sajdah, 32:16)

They get up during the night to worship Allah but are fearful all the while they pray to their Lord unsure if their effort is worth presenting before Him.

The Condition Of The Pious Men

Allah also says in the Qur'an in reference to the pious people:

كَانُوْا قَلِيْلًا مِّنَ الَّيْلِ مَا يَهْجَعُوْنَ o وَبِالْاَ سْحَارِهُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُوْنَ

(الذريت:١٧، ١٨)

They used to sleep but little at night. And in the mornings they would ask for forgiveness (*az-Zariyat* 51:17-18)

The slaves of Allah sleep a. They offer the *Tahajjud Salat* and at dawn they seek the forgiveness of Allah. We are told in a *Hadith* that Hazrat Aishah رضی اللہ عنہا asked the Holy Prophet ﷺ, "Messenger of Allah, There is no time at Dawn to seek forgiveness Forgiveness is sought after committting a wrong while they pious people have worshipped Allah at night and have not committed a sin." The Prophet ﷺ said, "They seek forgiveness for a possible lapse or shortcoming in their worship. They fear they may have not put in a proper effort as was necessary." These people say:

مَا عَبَدْنَاكَ حَقَّ عِبَادَتِكَ

We have not worshipped You as is the right of Your worships.

The pious people do not fear the commission of sin alone, they also fear they might commit a mistake in their worship which would earn the displeasure of Allah.

Fear Of Allah Depends On Closeness To Him

The more a person is close to Allah and the more he has recognised Him, the more he will fear Him. The more he is away from Him, the less he will fear Allah. The latter person is like an infant. If he faces a King, a minister, even a lion, he will not fear him. But he who recognises the King fears him. The Companions رضی الله عنهم were the closest to Allah after the Prophets علیهم السلام and they feared Allah accordingly.

Hanzalah رضی الله عنه And Fear Of Allah

Once Hazrat Hanzalah رضی الله عنه went to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ trembling with fear. He said, "O Messenger of Allah, Hanzalah has become a hypocrite." The Prophet ﷺ said, "How is that Hanzalah?" Hanzalah رضی الله عنه said, "O Messenger of Allah ﷺ! when I am with you and you remind us of Paradise and Hell and of the Hereafter we almost see them and become soft-hearted and wish to neglect the world. But when we go away to our homes, to our family and occupation, we no longer have those feelings and get involved in the worldly affairs. We have one feeling here but quite the contrary when we are away from you. This is a sign of the hypocrite." The Holy Prophet ﷺ said in reply, يا حنظلة ساعة ساعة "O Hanzalah do not worry! This happens.There is a time for everything. Sometimes the heart softens much and sometimes it is not so. That is not the standard with Allah. The true standard is measured according to deeds. Let not men do anything against *Shari'ah* " (Muslim)

Umar رضی اللہ عنہ and Fear of Allah

Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ had heard the Prophet ﷺ say, "Umar will enter Paradise." He had also heard him say, "When I was on Mi'raj and visited Paradise, I found a splendid palace. A woman sat on one of its corners and performed ablution. I asked to whom did that palace belong? and I was told that it belonged to Umar. I wished very much to go into it because it was very beautiful but, O Umar, I remembered your modesty. You have great sense of honour. That is why I did not enter it but returned." On hearing it Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ began to weep and said, "Will I prevent you on that account?"

This was the position of Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ who had heard the Prophet ﷺ give him the glad tidings of Paradise and of a palace for him there. In spite of that he approached Hazrat Huzayfah bin Yaman رضی اللہ عنہ after the death of the Prophet ﷺ and asked him to confirm that he was not included among the hypocrites whose name the Prophet ﷺ had revealed to him. The Prophet ﷺ had in his life time revealed to Hazrat Huzayfah رضی اللہ عنہ the names of the hypocrites in Madinah. Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ knew that the Prophet ﷺ had given him the glad tidings of Paradise but he was worried lest he had done something afterwards that might have obliterated the previous standing. Thus, the more a person is near to Allah and knows Him better, the more he fears Him. We must know that unless a person fears Allah to any extent, he cannot acquire *taqwa.*

How May We Develop This Habit

We may grow fear of Allah in our hearts by setting aside sometime during the day or night to meditate. We can do it after dawn prayer or just before sleeping. We may imagine we are dying, lying on the death bed, all

relatives around. The soul departs from the body and it is being shrouded. Then the body is lowered into the grave after which the angels put their questions. We are then before Allah. Let us think along these lines. If a man thinks in this way everyday, then *Insha Allah* he will find that he is no more neglectful. We are neglectful because we do not think of death although we bury our dead relatives with our own hands. We do not think of death although we see many sudden deaths, we see people who are occupied day in and day out in amassing wealth die suddenly and do not even turn back to glimpse at their wealth. In spite of seeing all this, we connect death only to the dying and the dead but never think that we would die too. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said,

اكثروا ذكر هاذم اللذات الموت

"Remember often that which will end all pleasent seeming things." (Musnad, Ahmad)

If we devote sometime every day to meditate in this manner, we will grow fear of Allah in our hearts to some extent at least.

Fate Overtakes

The Holy Prophet ﷺ said, "One of you conducts himself in a manner that qualifies him for Paradise until he is at a distance of one arm's length from achieving it when fate overtakes him and he begins to behave in a manner that leads him to Hell until he finally goes to Hell. As against this, one of you behaves in a manner that qualifies him for Hell but fate overtakes him and he begins to perform deeds that lead him to Paradise until he enters Paradise.

We Must Not Be Proud Of Our Deeds

We learn from this *Hadith* that none of us should boast that he performs certain deeds. We cannot rely on our deeds because reliance may only be placed on the final deeds of a person's life as we see in another *Hadith*:

انما العبرة بالخواتيم

"It is only the ending that is of consequence."

(Bukhari, Book 81, Ar-Riqaq Hadith: 6493)

The behaviour of a person in the last stages of his life is of consequence. That is what is seen. We must not, therefore, do things that take us towards Hell but we must do pious things and keep fearing Allah.

Inauspiciousness Of Evil Deeds

However, we must remember that no one will be compelled to perform evil deeds to despatch him to Hell. That person, in fact, does those deeds of his own accord without the least bit of compulsion. But, the inauspiciousness of the bad deeds that he does erases the reward accumulated against past good deeds. It also pulls him towards more bad deeds. Some sins are malignant so they drive the sinner deeper and deeper into sin. The result is that his past pious life is overshadowed. That is why our elders have advised us that we must not consider any sin insignificant; it could be that a minor sin might cause one to lose all his previous pious efforts. Besides, the mere commission of a sin on the presumption that it is minor makes it a major sin, and the danger is that it leads to other sinful activities and gradually the man becomes a habitual sinner.

Example Of Minor & Major Sins

Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه has cited the examples of minor and major sins as a spark and a large fire. No one will enclose a spark in his suit case on the assumption that it is a harmless thing. If he does that then the spark will burn the suit case and all its contents to ashes.

Result Of Rude Behaviour With Elders

To show disrespect to righteous men, to be rude to them or to pain them often causes adverse consequences. Even if anyone has a difference of opinion with a righteous person then he must let it remain at that because if he displays rudeness to him and is disrespectful then the rude man becomes involved in sinful activity. My respected father, Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه has written a booklet, *Dars-e-Ibrat* (Urdu) in which he has described a lesson-giving incident of a very righteous man. All his life he was a very pious and righteous man and regarded an eminent Shaikh and a man devoted to Allah. Suddenly he took an about-turn and did evil deeds. So, sometimes this is the punishment against minor sins. Therefore, we must not do anything sinful under the supposition that it is minor lest it be the one committed at the end of one's life. All religious elders make it a practice to supplicate Allah that He make their end a righteous one.

Blessings Of Piety

In juxtaposition to this a man is evil, immersed in sin, suddently he is inspired by Allah and he becomes pious. This inspiration follows a good deed. For instance, he is inspired first to do a minor good deed through whose auspiciousness Allah causes him to do more good deeds, and, as a result, the doors of Paradise are opened up for

him. This is why the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said:

لا يحقرن احد من المعروف شيئا

Let not anyone think little of a pious deed. (*Muslim*)

How can he know that very deed may bring about a revolution in his life and success with it? Allah may then forgive him. There are innumerable instances of righteous people who began the climb after doing a minor good deed. We must not belittle even a minor pious action. I have written a booklet in Urdu by the name *Assan Naykiyan* (Easy Good Deeds, in English) which is a collection of apparently small, and minor acts which are termed virtuous and excellent in the *Ahadith.* If a man performs them then he will add considerably to his pious deeds. Every Muslim must read that booklet and accustom himself to perform those pious deeds.

Reality Of Faith

Some people argue that since the fate of a man is already decided whether he will go to Paradise or to Hell, as pointed out in this *Hadith*, what then is the purpose of doing good deeds. We must understand that the *Hadith* does not mean to say that a man will do what is prescribed for him. On the contrary, the *Hadith* tells us that whatever he will do at his own option is recorded in fate. Fate is the *knowledge of Allah* who knows beforehand what a man will do of his own free will. That is recorded in the Preserved Tablet (*Lauh Mahfuz*). So, a man's entry into Paradise or Hell depends on his own actions, and it is not that a man will do what is predestined for him. It is actually the reverse, fate is what a man will do of his own accord. Allah has allowed man to choose and he acts according to his choice. Thus, it is wrong to sit idle

because everything is predestined. When the Holy Prophet ﷺ narrated this *Hadith*, the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم asked him:

ففيما العمل يارسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم

> What is the meaning of doing anything, then, O Messenger of Allah!

They asked him what was the purpose of being good or bad when it has been decided already whether a man will go to Paradise or Hell. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said :

اعملوا فكل ميسر لها خلق له

> Go on performing deeds. Every person will have to do what he has been created for.(Therefore, let us use our discretion and perform our deeds)

Let Us Not Be Careless

The purpose of narrating this *Hadith* is to caution man from placing reliance on his personal voluntary devotional exercises. He should not be over-confident that if he treads the path of *Shari'ah* he is sure of Paradise. On the contrary, man must not be sure till the last moment of his life. He must always worry and fear lest he suffers a change of behaviour for the worse. Maulana Rumi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has said

اندریں راہ ے تراش و ے خراش
تادمِ آخر دے فارغ مباش

> "There are always changes on this path, Till the last moment, one cannot be carefree."

One has to keep one's eyes open lest he goes on the wrong path. Many prominent people have erred through carelessness. Therefore, we must not be neglectful till the last moment of our lives.

The Lightest Punishment Of Hell

We are told of a saying of the Holy Prophet ﷺ in a *Hadith*: The lightest punishment a man will receive on the Day of Resurrection will be that two sparks will be placed below his soles. But they will be so severe that because of them the man's brain will boil and he will suppose that he is being given the severest of punishments." Some narrations state that this punishment will be awarded to the paternal uncle of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, Abu Talib because he had been very helpful to the Holy Prophet ﷺ but did not profess faith until his last breath. Allah knows best.

Nevertheless, we may imagine the condition of one who is awarded a very severe punishment when the lightest punishment will cause the recepient's brains to boil. Let us sometimes imagine the chastisement in Hell so that we grow in ourselves fear of Allah and gain *taqwa.*

Stages In Hell

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has described the condition of different dwellers of Hell. He has said that some will have the Fire upto their ankles. We have seen in the foregoing lines what will happen to those who have the fire below their soles and can imagine what will happen to him when the fire reaches the ankles. There will be some dwellers of Hell who will have the fire upto their knees, some more will have upto their backs, others will have it upto their Collar bones joining their shoulder blades to the breast bones. These are some of the stages of the dwellers of Hell. May Allah protect us by His mercy and benevolence. *Aameen!*

The Gathering Ground

This was a short description of what would happen in Hell. Before anyone is sent to Hell, there will be a Gathering Ground on *Yaumul Hashr,* (the day of gathering). What will happen there? The Messenger of Allah ﷺ has said, "People will stand before the Lord of the worlds. They will be covered with perspiration, some down into it upto part of their ears.". This means that it will be very hot and men will perspire so much that they will drown into it upto their ears. The words of another *Hadith* are: "On the Day of Resurrection, people will perspire so much that their perspiration will go under the ground upto seventy cubics, and it will drown people (above the ground) upto their ears."

The Expanse of Hell

There is another *Hadith* narrated by Abu Hurayrah رضی الله عنه that they were seated in the company of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ when they heard a loud noise from something falling down. The Holy Prophet ﷺ asked his companions if they knew what that noise was and they said only Allah and His Messenger knew best. Then, the Holy Prophet ﷺ said, "A stone was dropped into Hell seventy years ago and, today, it has reached the bottom. This sound that you heard is from the stone touching the bottom of Hell, " Until recently men found it difficult to believe that a stone would take seventy years to travel to the bottom when it is dropped from the mouth but now science does confirm such a possibility. Thus science tells us that there are many stars that emanate light since the time they were created and although their light travels towards us it has not yet reached earth. When the creation of Allah is itself so large and spacious, then Hell too

(which is part of it) could be so large that a stone would land down seventy years after release. The aim of this *Hadith* is to impress upon us the expanse of Hell. May Allah protect all of us from Hell. *Aameen*

The gist of these *Ahadith* is that we must think of death and of Paradise and Hell. Gradually, this will grow in our hearts fear of Allah. It will then be easy to perform pious deeds and shun sin.

May Allah grow in our hearts fear of Allah and give us strength to restrain ourselve from sin. *Aameen!*

And our concluding prayer is that Praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the worlds.

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Series: 75

KEEP GOOD BONDS WITH RELATIVESS

DARUL ISHAAT URDU BAZAR KARACHI

Venue	:	Jame'masjid Baitul-Mukarram, Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Karachi.
Date	:	4th September, 1992

Keep Good Bonds With Relatives

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهد ان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده و رسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيراً كثيراً

اما بعد !

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطٰن الرجيم بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

عن ابى هريرة رضى الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ان الله تعالى خلق الخلق حتى اذا فرغ منه قامت الرحم فقالت هذا مقام العائذبك من القطيعة قال نعم اما ترضين ان اصل من وصلك واقطع من قطعك قالت بلى قال بذلك لك ـ

ثم قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم اقرؤا ان شئتم: " فَهَلْ عَسَيْتُمْ إِنْ

تَوَلَّيْتُمْ اَنْ تُفْسِدُوْا فِى الْاَرْضِ وَتُقَطِّعُوْا اَرْحَامَكُمْ اُولٰٓئِكَ الَّذِيْنَ لَعَنَهُمُ
اللّٰهُ فَاَصَمَّهُمْ وَاَعْمٰى اَبْصَارَهُمْ" (مسلم، كتاب البر والصلة، باب صلة الرحم)

All praise belongs to Allah. We praise Him, beseech Him for help and seek His forgiveness. We believe in Him and place our trust in Him. We seek refuge in Allah from the mischief of our souls and from our evil deeds. He whom Allah guides, none can mislead and he whom He leaves stray none can guide. And, we bear witness that there is no god but Allah Who is Alone and has no partner, and we bear witness that Sayyidina Muhammad is His Slave and His Messenger - may Allah bless him, his family and his companions. And may He favour him and give him peace, a complete peace.

I seek refuge in Allah from the cursed devil. In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

We have it from Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Allah created the creations and when He finished from that *ar-Rahm* (ties of relationship) stood up and said: (O Allah) This is the place where I seek refuge with You from the severing of relations. He said: Yes! Are you not pleased that I will keep good relationship with one who keeps you united and I will sever relationship with one who severs you. It said: Certainly! Allah Said: That is how it will be for you.

Then the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Recite, if you like:

فَهَلْ عَسَيْتُمْ اِنْ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ اَنْ تُفْسِدُوْا فِى الْاَرْضِ وَتُقَطِّعُوْا اَرْحَامَكُمْ ۝
اُولٰٓئِكَ الَّذِيْنَ لَعَنَهُمُ اللّٰهُ فَاَصَمَّهُمْ وَاَعْمٰى اَبْصَارَهُمْ (سورة محمد: ٢٣.٢٤)

If you turn away, then is it to be expected of you anything but that you would do corruption in the land and sever your ties of kinship? Those are they whom Allah has cursed, so He has made them deaf and blinded their sights."
(Surah Muhammad 47:22-23)

Keeping Good Relations Encouraged

We have read the *Hadith* narrated by Abu Hurayrah رضی اللہ عنہ. In another version, it is stated that *ties of relationship* caught hold of the throne. Anyway the question arises how did it stand up? This is something that only Allah and His Messenger ﷺ know. We cannot describe it because *ar-Rahm* or ties of relationship is not something with a body that may stand up, but sometimes Allah will grant a body in the Hereafter and the heaven to such things as do not normally have a body.

Yet Another Verse

Actually, this *Hadith* is an explanation of all those verses of the Qur'an in which Allah repeatedly enjoins that rights of relatives be fulfilled and ties be maintained with them. Thus whenever he delivered the sermon of *Nikah* (marriage), the Prophet ﷺ recited the following verse of the Qur'an:

وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ الَّذِىْ تَسَآءَلُوْنَ بِهٖ وَالْاَرْحَامَ (النساء : ١)

So fear Allah by Whom you demand (your rights) of one another, and fear (breaking) kinship of wombs. (an-Nisa : 1)

When everyone demands his rights from another person he demands them by Allah - on His Name and cautions him to fear lest he violates the rights of relatives

and face Allah's punishment in the Hereafter. The Holy Qur'an and the *Ahadith* are replete with exhortations to meet the rights of kinship.

Shari'ah Is Another Name For Granting Rights Of Other People

The truth is that *Shari'ah* is actually another name for meeting the rights of others. There are rights of Allah and rights of the slaves of Allah, and the latter differ according to different people. There are rights of parents, children, spouse, kith and kin, neighbours, companions in journey, and in this manner, *Shari'ah* is a text defining rights of people. If anyone does not give even one of these rights then his following *Shari'ah* is faulty, his religion is incomplete. If any one meets the rights of Allah but does not meet the rights of fellowmen then his religion is blemished and he is not following the religion faithfully. Among the rights, Allah has given rights to relatvies too particularly.

All Human Beings Are Relatives.

If we think of it, all children of Hazrat Adam عليه السلام are one family related to each other as the Prophet ﷺ has said. All human beings have one, common father Hazrat Adam عليه السلام. We are descended from him, all of us. Later on human beings branched off into families and tribes. They settled at different places. Relations came to be known as distant and were then considered as such although actually all mankind are relatives of one another. Some people are closed relatives and some distant, but all are tied in kinship, all are relatives.

Giving Rights Results In Peace

Some people have special rights. They are close relatives and they include brothers, sisters, uncles-paternal and maternal - spouse, father and mother. In common, parlance, they are the ones who are called relatvies. If their rights are given faithfully, life will be peaceful and secure. What we see of mutual wrangling and disputes, hatred for one another and enmity, and lawsuits, are all results of neglecting mutual rights among close relatives. If everyone gives rights of his relatives, kith and kin, there will never be any dispute never squabbles and never disagreements, and never any lawsuit. That is why Allah has commanded us to give these rights and earn a peaceful life. The *family* is the base of a society. If a family is not united and its members do not love each other and do not have proper mutual relation then the whole society suffers. Its mischief spreads in the entire society and it soils it. Then the entire nation gets the stain. To avoid this, Allah and His Messenger ﷺ have laid great emphasis on giving rights of relatives and keeping good ties with them.

Keep Good Ties For The Sake Of Allah

It is every religion and every society that calls for giving rights of relatives and maintaining good relations with them but the principle taught by the Holy Prophet ﷺ in this regard is distinct from every other teaching. If we adopt that principle we will never lag behind in giving rights of relatives and dealing well with them. The principle he taught us is that we should never aim to please our relatives whenever we deal with them nicely but we should aim at obtaining the pleasure of Allah. Our intention in metting out fair treatment to our relatives should be to obey the command of Allah and thus please Him and we must tell

ourselves that we do that for the pleasure of Allah. If we do it with the intention to please Allah, then we will not anticipate a return from the relatvie for our good behaviour with him. Our minds will be made up accordingly and if our relatives are happy because of our conduct and thank us or reciprocate then that would be a blessing for us. If they do not reciprocate and do not be grateful and do not show happiness at our conduct even then we have to continue our efforts as part of the obligation imposed on us by Allah.

We Must Not Expect Gratitude And Reciprocation

While everyone is agreed that the rights of relatives should be met, the problem arises because, once these rights are given, the giver expects a grateful gesture and a reciprocal move. The recepient is supposed to publicise the donor's conduct. But, if he does not thank or respond then the giver of rights is disappointed and feels hurt. He begins to think bad of his relative and disparages him with the result that he loses the reward he had earned. He harbours illwill for the relative and will never again show goodwill to him. When the time comes, he will hesitate to deal with him in a good manner because he does not even utter a 'thank you', to him. Not only does he cease to deal with the relative in a good way, he also surrenders whatever reward he had earned previously because the goodwill that he had shown was not for the sake of Allah but to get a 'thank you' and a return. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said, therefore, whenever we deal with other people in a good manner we should have the pleasure of Allah in mind and anticipate no return from the person to whom we are being good, nor may we expect him to show gratitude in words.

Who Is The One To Keep the bonds of Kinship Intact

There is a *Hadith* that we must remember always. The Holy Prophetﷺ has said:

لَيْسَ الْوَاصِلُ بِالْمُكَافِي لٰكِنَّ الْوَاصِلُ مَنْ اِذَا قُطِعَتْ رِحْمُهُ وَصَلَهَا

(بخاری، کتاب الادب، باب لیس الواصل بالمکافی)

"*Al-Wasil* - the person who keeps ties of relationship intact is not the one who reciprocates but he is the one who maintains good relations with those relatives who break bonds of kinship with him." (Bukhari Book of Adab, 78. Hadith 7991)

That person is not credited with having maintained ties of relationship who does it in a gesture of reciprocation, because the other person has maintained the ties. He reciprocates in equal measure to what his relative does in keeping alive the bonds. He says to himself, "If he keeps the ties of relationship, I will do likewise but if he severs them, I too will sever the ties." This person is not defined as one who joins ties of kinship. He will not be rewarded for joining ties of kinship. The person who really joins relationship is he who carries on his effort inspite of the fact that the other man violates the right and severs the relationship. This person ignores the other man's behaviour and keeps the ties intact for the sake of Allah and to gain his pleasure. He is the one who really joins bonds of kinship and who is entitled to reward on that account.

We Are Restricted By Custom

If we asked anyone today if our relatives have any rights, he will say promptly that they do have. But the question is how many give these rights and to what extent?

If we investigate, we will find that we are restricted by our custom and the bonds that we maintain with our relatives are limited by custom. We do not go beyond that. For instance, we take care to offer a gift on the occasion of a marraige of a relative because it is a custom although we may not be able to pay for it or not feel like giving the gift. If we do not make a present, the hosts may feel offended because they had given gifts when they had been invited. So the gift is given not because of love but to meet custom and to show off. The result is that the giver of gifts will not earn a reward but, on the contrary, is committing a sin because his intention is to show off and earn a name for himself.

It Is Unlawful To Give An Equal Return On Occasions

A custom is in vogue in our society whereby guests repay the host the gifts that they had given them when they had invited them earlier. This exchange of gifts in like value is known as *Niyotah*. People remember the gifts different people had given them in the shape of cash and know what they have to give. Some people maintain a proper record that is consulted when the occasion arises. This amount has to be paid at all cost even if he cannot afford it and has to leave his children hungry. If he does not give, he will be looked down upon by society members. The principle on which this works is the 'equal return' basis, and it is unlawful. The Qur'an has called it *Riba* and it says about it:

وَمَآ اٰتَيْتُمْ مِّنْ رِّبًا لِّيَرْبُوَا فِيْٓ اَمْوَالِ النَّاسِ فَلَا يَرْبُوْا عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ ۚ وَمَآ اٰتَيْتُمْ مِّنْ زَكٰوةٍ تُرِيْدُوْنَ وَجْهَ اللّٰهِ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْمُضْعِفُوْنَ (سورة الروم: ٣٩)

And whatever you give in usury in order that it may increase upon people's riches, it increases

> not with Allah; but what you give in *zakah*, seeking Allah's Countenance (will increase), so those who (do this) shall have manifold increase
> (ar-Rum. 30:39)

This refers to giving anything to other people in the form of *Niyotah* as an apparent gift (but with the intention of receiving back a like value or an increase). There will be no increase with Allah except when *zakah* is given. or *Sadaqah*, with the intention of obtaining the pleasure of Allah. In the latter cases, Allah does increase the wealth of the givers.

Why Is A Gift Given

If anyone feels that he should present a gift to one of his relative who is celebrating a happy occasion then he will earn a reward for that provided he is sincere and expects no return for it. His only motive is to fulfil the obligation of relationship and to please Allah. His gift will be bracketed with joining relationship.

How May The Intention Be Verified

How may one know whether the intention in giving the gift is to see the pleasure of Allah or to hope for a reimbursement from the recepient? It is verified very easily. If the giver of a gift looks out for a sign of gratitude from the receiver and waits for a return gesture when he invites the receiver to an occasion then these are clear signs that the gift was not given for the sake of Allah. It is also the same when the return gift is of a lesser value and, therefore, not appreciated. In these cases a gift is given, but it is wasted because the intention is blemish. On the other hand, it is a sign that the gift is given to secure the pleasure of Allah if the giver does not expect thanks from the receiver and

forgets he had given a gift; he does not expect a return for that but tells himself that he has given the gift for the sake of Allah and expects no gratitude or a return gesture. "I will not mind if he does not reciprocate," he tells himself. This gift turns out to be a blessing for both the giver and receiver.

A Gift Is Lawful And Pure

My respected father Maulana Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه used to say that the gift a Muslim gives to another willingly and with love with no ostentatious designs, is the most lawful and pure thing in the universe. This is because in what a man earns himself, he might have committed excess or erred somewhere so that the earning is not fully lawful but when a Muslim gives a gift sincerely with love and no ulterior motive, the only driving force being to please Allah then the gift is lawful without doubt. This is why my respected father valued a gift very much and Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه had set certain principles for giving gifts and he valued them. He was very particular in spending them because that was a lawful pure wealth of a Muslim given for the sake of Allah. That gift was full of blessings. In short a gift that is given for the sake of Allah is auspicious for the giver and the receiver, and that which is given with ostentatious designs is neither a blessing for the giver nor for the receiver.

A Gift That One Waits For Is Not Auspicious

The *Hadith* goes so far as to tell us that if we look forward to the visit of a certain person who will bring a gift along for us then that gift is inauspicious. But, a gift is auspicious if it is received without waiting for it or asking for it. Allah puts it into somebody's mind to give a present

and he presents the gift then it is very auspicious. In other words, the auspiciousness wanes away if one waits for the gift, personal objective being behind the wait.

The Case Of an Elder Religious Man

There was a very devoted, righteous man. He was god-fearing and deeply religious. Such men often face difficult trials. Once he encountered hunger and remained without food for several days. He was delivering a sermon to his disciples but because of severe weakness could not convey his message well. His voice was very low and weak. One of his disciples in the gathering saw the condition of his mentor and understood that the weakness was due to hunger and perhaps he had not eaten for days. He went out with the intention of bringing food for his Shaikh. He came back after a little while with food laid down in a tray and presented it to his Shaikh. The Shaikh saw the food, thought about it for a moment and said, "No. Take it away. I will not eat it." So, the disciple took it away. He was not like the disciples we come across these days who would insist that their mentor should eat. This man knew that his Shaikh was a perfect mentor whose order must be obeyed without demur. He knew that he was not being pretentious in rejecting food but that there must have been a reason behind the refusal. So, he took away the food he had brought. Then, he came back after sometime again with the food and presented it before the Shaikh saying, "Do accept it now." The religious man said, "Yes, I will eat it now."

The disciple revealed later on,"When I first brought the food and the Shaikh refused it, I understood that he refused it because when I got up from the gathering and went out, he presumed that I had related his weakness to

hunger. So, he anticipated that I would bring him food and he was waiting for that. When I did bring the food, he was in a state of anticipation and hope. He recalled the *Hadith* that if a gift is received after wait and hope it is not blessed. So he refused the food. I took away the food so that he may not wait and hope for it. When I brought it again after a while the hindrance to acceptance of the gift was removed so he accepted the gift."

If there is wait for the gift, or an ostentatious behaviour behind serving or expectation of reimbursement then the gift is without blessing.

Grow Love Through Gifts

The saying of the Holy Prophetﷺ is recalled in a *Hadith*:

تها دوا تحابوا (المؤطا فی حسن الخلق، باب ماجاء فی المهاجرة)

"Exchange gifts and grow mutual love."

(al-Muwatta - in Hasan ul-Haq, Chapter Ma ja fil Muhajirah)

Exchange of gifts grows mutual love provided the driving force is to see the pleasure of Allah, to give the rights of relatives, to improve one's lot in the Hereafter and attain success before Allah. But, we do not give gifts with this in mind. We can see what happens in marriage parties; gifts are given to follow custom. Gifts are not given to fulfil mutual obligations or to meet the rights of kith and kin. Even if some of the menfolk decide to give their relatives gifts, the women in the family stall their move saying, "What's the use in giving a gift now without an occasion. Let's wait for an occasion in their family when the gift would be given. Our burden will be removed then. "The truth, however, is that the correct time for giving a gift is when there was no occasion and the

intention was sincere there being no desire to gain fame. The motive was to please Allah and one's relative or friend. That was the correct time to make a present, a gift should be made at such times always.

Do Not Look At The Gift But At The Spirit That Prompts It

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has also taught us that we should not look at the thing that is presented but we should look at the spirit with which it is presented. If a small gift is presented with sincere love then it is much better than a large gift that is given to earn a name and to show off. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said:

> لا تحقرن جارة لجارتها ولو فرسن شاة(بخاری کتاب الادب، بام لاتحقرن جارة لجار تها)
>
> "A female neighbour must not look down upon the gift of her lady neighbour even if it were the trotters of a sheep:"(Bukhari. Book of Manners. 78. Hadith 6017)

This is because we do not have to see what is presented, we must see the sentiments that prompted the person to make the gift. If it is presented because of love, the gift must be valued. It is a blessed gift. On the other hand, a very precious gift lacks blessings if ostentatious motives are behind it. Therefore, if a slave of Allah - no matter who the person is - presents us something howsoever small we must accept it as an auspicious gift. Normally, a small gift is not prompted by an ostentatious behaviour because it is an ordinary thing and what can one show off about it. But a precious thing may be accompanied by a display. Therefore, we must value a small gift more than a large one.

An Invitation From The Earner Of Lawful Means

My respected father, Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه used to narrate an incident of a righteous man in Deoband whose occupation was mowing the grass. He earned his livelihood through selling the grass. His daily income was six paisas. He divided his income in three. He spent two paisas on himself, two paisas on charity and the remaining two he set aside for a feast to which he invited prominent scholars of the Dar ul-Uloom which he did when he had collected a few paisas. The invitees included the Shaikh ul-Hind, Maulana Mahmud ul-Hasan رحمة الله عليه, Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi رحمة الله عليه, and others. These scholars would look out for the invitation for the whole month while the very rich would also invite them but they never waited for their invitation - because that man's invitation was sincere only for the sake of Allah and from lawful earnings. They found much blessings in his feast, the like of which they did not experience in any other. They found their hearts glow with light for days together after they ate his meals and felt impelled to worship and engage in devotional exercises. This shows that a small gift is more likely to be sincere than a large gift and, therefore, we must value it.

Gift Must Not Be Given To Meet Obligations Of Custom

When we give a gift we must remember that a gift is given to provide comfort and to make someone happy. The gift that is given to satisfy custom will not provide comfort or happiness to the receiver because only customary things are given at such times like sweet meat, piece of cloth, and so on. If anyone gives something else as a gift that would look out of place and people would pass adverse comments

on it, and the giver will feel ashamed. But, if anyone wishes to give a gift sincerely for the sake of Allah alone then he will search for something the receiver needs. He will give him that so that he benefits from it.

The Unique Gifts Of An Elder

There was a religious elder, Shah Abdul Aziz رحمة الله عليه. He was a well-known missionary worker and a member of the *Tabligh Jamaat* that is very active in the propagation of religion. He came frequently to my respected father رحمة الله عليه and was a good friend. When he visited my father at the Dar ul-Uloom he brought with him one or the other out-of-the-oridinary gift. These were unconventional gifts that were not normally presented on visits. Sometimes he brought a quire of paper and presented it to my father. No one gives such a gift but this man knew that my father wrote profusely and paper would be a useful gift for him. He hoped to be rewarded too through the pious writings on the paper. Sometimes he brough an ink pot. Naturally, anyone who hopes to make a display will not bring such things as gift. Only such a person who hopes to please Allah and bring comfort to the recepient will give gifts of this kind. If he had presented a box of sweetmeat, my father did not eat it and that would have gone to other people beside him.

A Gift Must Be Chosen Sensibly

In giving gifts, we have to choose sensibly. This ability is also given by Allah and sought sincerely. This does not apply to those cases where a gift is given with ostentatious designs when custom is followed and an ink pot would be a laughing stock but a box of sweatmeat would look beautiful and appropraite. Our society is

entangled in customs and ties of relationship also follow dictates of custom and habit. On the one hand exhange of gifts is a very good thing which is encouraged by the Holy Prophet ﷺ but we have made that part of customs and lost the virtuous angle that brought us Allah's reward. We have lost its blessings and happiness and made it a sinful habit. Let us realise that these things, like *niyotah,* are unlawful and sinful. Reward accrues only if a recepient reciprocates of his own accord without pressure or hint.

Do Everything For The Sake Of Allah

There are other things too besides gifts that go a long way in cementing ties of relationship with kin. We may share their grief and sorrow, help them in their time of distress, and so on. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has advised us that even while helping a relative we must do it only for the sake of Allah and not expect him to laud us or show gratitude to us or reimburse us. If we do it with such motives we will not earn happiness although we may have put in an effort.

Relatives Are Like Scorpions

In keeping with the deterioration of our society, the Arabic language has an adage- الاقارب کا العقارب (*relatives are scorpions.* The first word means 'relatives' and the second is the plural of 'scorpion'. It says that, like scorpions, relatives always sting. They are never happy. This saying gained currency after our wrong expectations did not materialise. It happens that people behave kindly with their relatives in the expectation that they would reciprocate and be grateful but that does not happen so the relatives are likened to scorpions. But, the kind treatment should be shown on the understanding that it is a command of Allah and the example of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and, whether or not a return

gesture is shown, the command of Allah will be obeyed. Whether the recepient responds or not Allah will surely respond. A person's true test is when he goes on treating his relatives well although they do not respond or give a rough treatment in return. He must go on maintaining good relations with the hope of geting a return from Allah for Whom he does the good work. We must remember that the Prophet ﷺ has said, "He is not the one to link relationship who expects a reciprocal gesture but he is one who joins broken relationships inspite of a negative response."

The Prophet's ﷺ Treatment Of His Relatives

We must look at the Prophet ﷺ, how he treated his relatives. With the exception of a few relatives, all were his staunch enemies and they did all they could to cause him hardship and trouble. These include the very close relatives, his paternal uncle and his cousin who put him to difficulty every now and then. But, the Holy Prophet ﷺ did not lag behind in giving the rights of his relatives. We see him at the conquest of Makkah when he had an opportunity to take his revenge but he forgave them all. He made it known that whoever entered the *Haram* was safe and whoever took shelter in the house of Abu Sufyan was safe, and he did not seek vengeance on anyone and he did not expect anyone to reciprocate his fair treatment of anyone. It is *Sunnah,* therefore, to respond to a relative's unfair treatment with good treatment.

Do Not Place Expectation With The Creatures

Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanav رحمة الله عليه has said something very wise from his experience. He said, "There is only one way to live in comfort in this world and that is to cease to have expectations with the creatures of Allah." We

may not expect anyone to be good to us, to help us, to remove our problems and to share our griefs. All our expectations must be placed with One Being - Allah, Full of Glory and Majesty. If we have no expectation from anyone of the creatures of Allah and if we get anything from them by way of fair treatment or help then that will give us much joy and happiness, and if they torment us or are unfair to us then we will not grieve over that. This is because we had not expected any good from them and did not rely on them so if they are bad to us we would have expected that any way and if they do good to us that would please us. If, however, we expect good treatment at their hands and they deal with us unfairly then that would grieve us much.

Man May Expect Pain & Sorrow In This World

The reality of this life is that it always places hardship and pain in a man's path. If he finds happiness and joy in his life then he must understand that it is the blessing of Allah on him. If he is grieved then he must know that it was expected and he need not feel sorry for that. If we follow this advice then we will have no cause for complaint because a man complains only when he fails to get what he expects. Let him place his expectations in Allah and hope not for anything from fellow men then, *Insha Allah,* he will live in peace and comfort.

Lives Of Men Of Allah

Our elders gave us this prescription and I have passed it on to you but nothing is achieved from merely listening to sermons or reading good advice. We must understand it well and put it into practice. We must examine ourselves again and again and ask ourselves these questions. What do we expect from others? Why do we

rely on them? Why have we not turned to Allah for these things? We must look at the *men of Allah* who are always happy. If they encounter an hardship, may be they are grieved momentarily but they do not let the grief engulf them nor are they restless because they have established a link with their Master. They never turn to fellow creatures, or expect anything from them, and they ask them not for anything. They only ask Allah for their requirement and they are always content and peaceful.

The Case Of A Righteous Man

Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه has written about a righteous man whom someone asked, "How are you?" He replied, "*Al-hamdu lillah* (Praise be to Allah)." The righteous then added, "My brother, you are asking me how I am although nothing in the universe goes against my wishes. Everything in the universe happens as I like. "If everything in the universe happens as one likes then who else is happier than that person and who is more luxurious than him. The person who had put the question was taken aback and asked, "This experience was not available to the Holy Prophets ﷺ too. They could not say that everything in the universe obeyed their wishes. Rather, things happened even against their wishes. How, then, can you say everything happens according to your wishes?"

The righteous man replied that he had made his wishes subservient to the wishes of Allah. "The will of my Allah is my wish and what my Allah chooses, I choose. Nothing in this universe goes against the will of Allah and His wish 'and I have surrendered my ego so everything happens as I wish because it happens as Allah wills. Therefore, I am very happy and live in luxury."

The Peace Of The Righteous

The *men of Allah,* the righteous men live a very comfortable and peaceful life. Hazrat Sufyan Thawri رحمة الله عليه has said about it that if the kings of the world learnt about the magnitude of peace and security these people enjoyed then they would fight them with their swords to snatch the comfort from these men. The peace that they enjoy is available to them because they turn away their sights from fellow creatures and because they expect nothing from them. We too can experience that. Let us refrain from hoping for something from fellow creatures and then see the peace we derive and enjoy. These things cannot be had by merely listening to somone narrate them or by reading about them. We must live in the company of devoted men and these things will come to us gradually and our lives-in this world and the next - will change for the better.

Summary

We may summarise this discussion by emphasising that the right of our relatives must be given to them together with a fair treatment for the sake of Allah and to gain His pleasure, not in an ostentatious manner and not to comply with custom.

May Allah be merciful to us and help us understand the facts, and to behave accordingly. *Aameen*

And the conclusion of our call is that praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the Worlds.

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Series: 76

THE MUSLIM FRATERNITY

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الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسنا ومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهد ان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد !

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطٰن الرجيم بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

وَافْعَلُوْا الْخَيْرَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُوْنَ (سورة الحج: ٧٧)

وعن ابن عمر رضى الله تعالى عنهما ان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال:

اَلْمُسْلِمُ اَخُوالْمُسْلِمِ لَا يَظْلِمُهُ وَ لَايُسْلِمُهُ وَمَنْ كَانَ فِيْ حَاجَةِ اَخِيْهِ كَانَ اللهُ فِيْ حَاجَتِهٖ وَمَنْ فَرَّجَ عَنْ مُسْلِمٍ كُرْبَةً فَرَّجَ اللهُ عَنْهُ كُرْبَةً مِنْ كُرَبِ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ وَمَنْ سَتَرَ مُسْلِمًا سَتَرَهُ اللهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ (ابو داؤد، كتاب

الادب باب المواخاة)

Praise belongs to Allah. We praise Him, beseech Him for help and we seek His forgiveness. We believe in Him and place our trust in Him. We seek refuge in Him from the mischief of our souls and from our evil deeds. He whom Allah guides none can mislead and he whom He leaves to stray none can guide. And, we bear witness that there is no god except Allah, the One, He has no partners; and we bear witness that Sayyidina Muhammad is His Slave and Messenger. May Allah bless him and his family and companions, and shower favours and peace, a complete peace.

I seek refuge in Allah from the cursed devil. In the Name of Allah the Compassionate, the Merciful. Do Good that you may prosper.(Surah al-Hajj, 22:77)

(this verse calls for prostration)

Ibn Umar رضی الله عنهما has said that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "A Muslim is the brother of another Muslim. He does not oppress the other and does not hand him over to the enemy (so that he does not leave him in the lurch). He who sees after the needs of his brother, Allah looks after his needs and satisfies him. And he who removes a Muslim's distress or hardship. Allah will remove a distress of the several he will face on the Day of Resurrection. And he who conceals a Muslim's secret, Allah will conceal his secret on the Day of Resurrection." (Abu Dawood. Kitab ul-Adab)

Do Good To Other People

It is not enough for a Muslim that he cause no hardship to another Muslim and oppress him not and preserve him from trouble, but he must go further and help him and be of service to him. He must do what he can, within his means, to satisfy his needs. He must try to remove an anxiety a Muslim brother might be facing. This is among the duties of a Muslim. Allah has said in the verse quoted above. "Do good deeds that you may be successful." To do good encompasses a wide range of goodness, for instance, it calls upon one to do good to another person, to give him good treatment, to be compassionate to him and to fulfil his needs.

A comprehensive *Hadith*

The *Hadith* that we have read above is narrated by Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar رضی اللہ عنہما. It tells us that a Muslim does not oppress another and does not desert him. It tells us that as long as he is engaged in fulfilling his brother's needs, Allah will fulfil all his needs and settle his affairs. It tells us further that on the Day of Resurrection, Allah will remove one of the hardships of the man who solves a Muslim's difficulty and removes his anxiety. The *Hadith* states furthur that on the Day of Resurrection, Allah will conceal the sins of the man who conceals the faults of a Muslim in this world, for instance, he does not publicise a major defect of a Muslim that he comes to know whether that is a major sin or shortcoming.

This is a very comprehensive *Hadith* and it comprises of several sentences. Each sentence calls for our careful attention. We must not only ponder over it but also put it into practice.

Muslims Are Brothers One Of The Other

In this *Hadith*, the first sentence that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said is that a *Muslim is the brother of another Muslim.* Thus, each of them will deal with every other Muslim in the same way as he deals with his brother, even if the other Muslim is a stranger, and the two are not friends yet they are to treat each other as brothers. By speaking this one sentence, the Holy Prophet ﷺ cut at the roots of discrimination that is common in our society. There is no discrimination between residents of different nations, people of different tribes and speakers of different languages. A Muslim is the brother of another Muslim no matter what he speaks, what country he comes from, what his occupation is, to what tribe he belongs. In every condition, the two are brothers.

One Does Not Enjoy Excellence Over The Other

Allah has stated this fact in the following words in the Holy Qur'an:

يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَـٰكُم مِّن ذَكَرٍ وَأُنثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَـٰكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَآئِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوٓا ۚ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِندَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَىٰكُمْ ۚ (سورة الحجرات: ١٣)

> O mankind! Surely we have created you from a male and a female, and have made you into nations and tribes that you may know one another. Surely the noblest among you in the sight of Allah is the most pious of you.
> (al-Hujurat, 49:13)

This verse proclaims a manifesto for all mankind. It tells them that their line of descent originates from one man and one woman, Hazrat Adam عليه السلام and Hazrat Hawwa عليها السلام. They have one father, Hazrat Adam عليه السلام, and one mother, Hazrat Hawwa عليها السلام. They are descended from

one father and one mother so they do not enjoy preference or excellence one over the other. A question arises because of this : "When all human beings are children of one father and one mother, then, O Allah, why did you divide them into different families and tribes?" Following our question, Allah let us know why; He said: لتعارفوا (that you may know one another). If all men spoke one language, resided in one country and belonged to one family then it would have been difficult to know one from other. For example, if three men are named Abdullah then to distinguish them their origin is attached to the name, Abdullah of Karachi, of Lahore, of Peshawar. This is why Allah created different languages and different cities. There is no excellence to anyone over the other (because of that) except on the basis of *taqwa.* A man who shows more *taqwa* - that is, is more God-fearing, devout, religious - enjoys greater closeness to Allah as a noble person even if he has a lower status by worldly standards.

Difference Between Islam & Disbelief

The Prophetﷺ showed us by example that we have to make a distinction between Islam and disbelief and prefer the first in our dealings with others. Abu Lahab was his paternal uncle and a chief of his family but had not abandoned disbelief. Therefore, his position is that the Qur'an curses him, and this a position that will carry on till the Last Day. Every Muslim who recites the Qur'an sends a curse on Abu Lahab when he reads this verse:

تَبَّتْ يَدَآ اَبِیْ لَهَبٍ وَّتَبَّ O(سورة اللهب:١)

Perish the hands of Abu Lahab and perish he.

(al-Lahab, 111:1)

Also, at the Badr, the Prophetﷺ fought his paternal

uncles, his father's elder brothers.

The abode of Bilal رضی الله عنه in Jannah

On the other side, the Prophet ﷺ embraced Hazrat Bilal رضی الله عنه who was a black man from Ethiopia. Rather, he asks him. "O Bilal! Let me know that behaviour of yours on account of which I heard your soft footsteps ahead of me in Paradise in my dreams tonight." This question was put to the man who is black and a resident of Ethiopia whom the Arabs looked down upon. Hazrat Bilal رضی الله عنه replied, "O Messenger of Allah! I do not do anything in particular except one little deed that I have observed regularly. Whenever I perform ablution during the day or night, I am sure to follow it up with voluntary *Salat* of two or four *rakaat*." (This *Salat* is known as *tahiyat ul-wadu.*) The Holy Prophet ﷺ confirmed that perhaps it was because of this that Allah granted him the high station. (Bukhari, Tahajjud)

Why Was Hazrat Bilal رضی الله عنه Ahead Of The Messenger of Allah ﷺ

The question perturbs some minds: why did Hazrat Bilal رضی الله عنه walk ahead of the Prophet ﷺ when no one does that? The Ulama have asserted that Hazrat Bilal رضی الله عنه was ahead of the Prophet ﷺ in Paradise not because of a higher station that he enjoyed over him but it was his practice in the world too to walk ahead as a sentry. He always carried a stick and walked ahead of the Holy Prophet ﷺ removing stones and thorns from the way and looking out for an intruder. Because it was his habit in the world to walk ahead of the Prophet ﷺ, Allah has honoured him with that distinction in Heaven too, "You protected my friend in the world so I will keep you ahead of him in heaven too!" That is why the Holy Prophet ﷺ heard his

footsteps before him in Paradise.

Islam gathers its adherents together

This distinction was achieved by him who was known as a slave, considered a lowly black and had no standing in terms of blood and family. In comparison Abu Lahab has the Qur'an curse him تبت يدا ابى لهب وتب (May the hands of Abu Lahab perish and may he perish). Hazrat Suhayb رضى الله عنه of Rome arrives and earns a high station. Hazrat Salman Farsi رضى الله عنه of Iran arrives and earns such a noble distinction that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said about him سلمان منا اهل البيت "Salman is one of us - the people of the house!" In this way the Prophet ﷺ broke down the icons of nationality, descent, colour and language and made known, "We are those who believe in one Allah Who has created all men from one man and one woman and all mankind are borthers."

اِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ اِخْوَةٌ

When the Prophet ﷺ migrated to Madinah, the tribes of Aws and Khazraj were at loggerhead with each other. A father would instruct his son to carry on his war with the enemy and seek vengeance with him. They fought a war in the Days of Ignorance by the name of *Harb Basus* that was waged for forty years. The war had its beginnings in a simple incident. Someone's chick had annoyed another person when it strayed in that man's fields. The owner of the fields killed the chick in anger. This infuriated the owner of the chick and after an exchange of hot words they came to blows after which swords were picked up and their respective tribes came to their aid. This war lasted for forty years. But, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ so engrossed them in the *Kalimah*: There is no god but Allah لا اله الا الله that their

hostility for one another cooled down into friendship. It could not be guessed after that if they had ever been hostile to one another and at such a prolonged war. The Qur'an has pointed out to their cordial ties of fraternity

وَاذْكُرُوْا نِعْمَتَ اللهِ عَلَيْكُمْ اِذْ كُنْتُمْ اَعْدَآءً فَاَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوْبِكُمْ فَاَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهٖٓ اِخْوَانًا (سورة آل عمران: ١٠٣)

> And remember Allah's blessing on you when you were enemies (of each other), and He united your hearts in love, and you became brethren by His blessing... (Al Imran, 3:103)

Let it not be that the fraternal relations are forgotten and the ways of the Days of Ignorance are reverted to.

We Have Forgotten The Principle

The first thing that the Prophet ﷺ taught us through the *Hadith* is that all Muslims are linked together in bonds of fraternity irrespective of the language they speak, the tribe to which they belong and the nation they are associated with. They must deal with one another in brotherly fashion. A Muslim must not be driven away from his brother because of difference in genealogy, nationality or language. History tells us that Muslims suffered defeat every time they thought in these terms and they forgot the principle taught to them by the Prophet ﷺ that a Muslim is the brother of the other Muslim. There has been always an instigator who pointed out differences of nationality or ethnic variations and in this way brought the two factions to fight each other. May Allah inspire us to adopt the principle taught by the Prophet ﷺ. *Aameen*! We do say and assert the words that Muslims are brothers one of the other but do we match our words with our behaviour? When the time comes our conduct is much

different from what we profess. Let all of us examine ourselves and resolve to reform our conduct so that we treat every other Muslim as our brother. May Allah be merciful to us and make us adopt this principle. *Aameen*!

A Muslim Helps Another Muslim

The *Hadith* says further ولا يسلمه, "and he does not desert him." It is not merely that he does not be cruel to him but he also does not abandon him. If a Muslim is surrounded by an anxiety or a difficulty and is in need of assistance then no Muslim will leave him in the lurch. He will not tell himself that it is not his concern what the other has to cope with, and he does not separate from him saying that. This is not the trait of a Muslim. On the contrary, it is part of a Muslim's duties that when he sees another Muslim in distress or anxiety, he should do his best to help him out, to remove his anxiety without worrying about his time being spent and his tasks being delayed.

An Eye-opening Account Of Our Times

The times that we are passing through are times when human life is not valued. A human being is not respected as such. There was a time when men would rush to help a stumbling fellowman stand up and to support him until he was properly balanced on his feet. If there was an accident, people would run and come to his aid, trying to dress his worunds. But, the situation has changed in our times. Let me recall an incident that I saw with my own eyes. I saw that a man was hit by a car that raced away after the accident. The man fell down flat. After that between twenty and twenty-five cars passed, the driver of each car slowing down to satisfy his inquisitive nature, but none of those

people stopped to help him. All the cars sped away after feeding their curiosity. In spite of that, the current generation call themselves civilised and cultured. We are not speaking of Islam here, but even as human beings, the drivers should have stopped, got down and seen what was wrong. They should have helped him as much as they could. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in the *Hadith* that is the topic of our discussion that it is not expected of a Muslim that he would abandon the other Muslim in this manner. Rather, it is the duty of a Muslim that he should try as best as he can to remove the difficulty and trouble of another Muslim when he finds him in that.

The Practice Of The Prophet ﷺ

It was the behaviour of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that whenever he learnt that someone was in need of something, he would do his best to get him that thing. If anyone was in some difficulty, he would be restless and continue to be so until he had done his utmost to help out the other man. It was only at the time of the Peace Treaty of Hudaybiah that he was hindered from helping out the Makkan Muslims who sought protection in Madinah. In compliance with the Treaty, he had to return those Muslims to the unbelievers. The Treaty was signed with the idolators of Makkah at the command of Allah. He said, "I am helpless because of the Treaty and I have to return the refugees." Apart from this incident, it never happened that the Prophet ﷺ did not help a Muslim whom he found in difficulty.

May Allah help us to conduct ourselves in the manner we have been taught in this discussion. *Aameen!*

And the conclusion of our call is that all praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the worlds.

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Series: 77

LOVE THE CREATURES OF ALLAH

DARUL ISHAAT URDU BAZAR KARACHI-1

Venue	:	Jame'Masjid Baitul-Mukarram, Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Karachi.
Date	:	10th January 1992

Love the Creatures of Allah

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهد ان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد!

عن ابى هريرة رضى الله عنه عن النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم قال:

مَنْ نَفَّسَ عَنْ مُؤْمِنٍ كُرْبَةً مِنْ كُرَبِ الدُّنْيَا نَفَّسَ اللهُ عَنْهُ كُرْبَةً مِنْ كُرَبِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَمَنْ يَسَّرَ عَلٰى مُعْسِرٍ يَسَّرَ اللهُ عَلَيْهِ فِى الدُّنْيَا وَالْاٰخِرَةِ وَمَنْ سَتَرَ مُسْلِمًا سَتَرَهُ اللهُ فِى الدُّنْيَا وَالْاٰخِرَةِ وَاللهُ فِىْ عَوْنِ الْعَبْدِ مَا كَانَ الْعَبْدُ فِىْ عَوْنِ اَخِيْهِ وَمَنْ سَلَكَ طَرِيْقًا يَلْتَمِسُ فِيْهِ عِلْمًا سَهَّلَ اللهُ بِهٖ طَرِيْقًا اِلَى الْجَنَّةِ وَمَا اجْتَمَعَ قَوْمٌ فِىْ بَيْتٍ مِنْ بُيُوْتِ اللهِ تَعَالٰى

يَتْلُوْنَ كِتَابَ اللهِ يَتَدَارَسُوْنَهُ بَيْنَهُمْ اِلَّا نَزَلَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّكِيْنَةُ وَغَشِيَتْهُمُ الرَّحْمَةُ وَحَفَّتْهُمُ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ وَذَكَرَهُمُ اللهُ فِيْمَنْ عِنْدَهُ وَمَنْ بَطَّأَبِهٖ عَمَلُهُ لَمْ يُسْرِعْ بِهٖ نَسَبُهُ (صحيح مسلم، كتاب الزكر والدعاء، باب فضل الا جتماع على تلاوة القران)

Praise belongs to Allah. We praise Him, beseech him for help, and we seek His forgiveness. We believe in Him and place our trust in Him. We seek refuge in Him from the mischief of our souls and from our evil deeds. He whom Allah guides none can mislead and he whom He leaves to stray none can guide. And we bear witness that there is no god but Allah, the Alone, Who has no partner, and we bear witness that Sayyidina Muhammad is His Slave and Messenger may Allah bless him, his family and Companions, and may He bestow favours and peace, a complete peace.

Hazrat Abu Hurayrah رضی اللہ عنہ has reported the Messenger of Allah ﷺ as saying: He who alleviates the suffering of a Believer out of the sufferings of the world, Allah will alleviate his suffering out of the several on the Day of Resurrection and he who makes easy the difficulties of the hard pressed, Allah will make his difficulties easy for him in this world and in the Hereafter, and he who conceals the secrets of a Muslim, Allah will conceal his secrets in the world and the Hereafter. Allah supports a slave as long as the slave supports his brothers, And he who treads the path in search of knowledge Allah makes that path easy leading to Paradise. And a group of people do not gather in a House of the Houses

of Allah reciting the Book of Allah and learning it but that there descends on them tranquility, and mercy envelopes them, and angels surround them. Allah makes a mention of them to those close to Him. As for him who is slow in doing his deeds, his lineage prevents him from that. (Muslim, Book of Zikr Hadith 6518)

What is *Jawami ʿul Kalim*

This *Hadith*, as we have seen, is narrated by Hazrat Abu Hurayrah رضی اللہ عنہ. The *Hadith* is made up of many sentences each spoken by the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Each of the expression is a complete sentence, comprehensive in meaning. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has also said, "I have been given the *Jawami ʿul Kalim*" اوتیت جوامع الکلم *Jawani'ul Kalim* are such expressions as are comprehensive in meaning, although a few words are spoken they give a deep wide meaning. The sentences comprise of a few words and are brief but they convey a wide, rich meaning and they call for exhaustive deeds. Sayings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ which are made of small sentences but encompass a wide meaning are called *Jawami ʿul Kalim* (Comprehensive Brief Sayings). So, in the *Hadith* quoted Hazrat Abu Hurayrah رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated many *Jawami ʿul Kalim* that cover various topics.

Reward On Removing Someone's Anxiety

The first sentence is about the person who alleviates a suffering out of the several a believer faces in this world. He may do it manually or otherwise. His action is very rewarding so much that on the Day of Resurrection, Allah will alleviate one of his sufferings as reward for his deed in the world.

Excellence of Allowing Time To An Indigent

The second sentence is about the person who makes difficulties easy for the hard-pressed. His reward is that Allah will make his difficulties easy for him both in this world and in the Hereafter. Say, someone is in debt, having borrowed money to meet a need but when the promised time comes for repayment of the debt, he is unable to pay it although he wishes to repay it. Then if the lender. Allows him time until he is able to repay, although he has a right to demand repayment at the promised time, Allah will make things easy for him in this world and the Hereafter. The Qur'an has said about such men:

وَإِنْ كَانَ ذُوْعُسْرَةٍ فَنَظِرَةٌ اَلٰى مَيْسَرَةٍ ۚ (سورة البقرة: ٢٨٠)

But if the debtor is in difficulty, let there be respite till it is easy (for him). (al-Baqarah, 2:280)

It calls upon a Believer to allow the debtor time until he is able to repay the loan.

Allah Loves Mildness

Allah loves very much mild behaviour in a person. He loves very much the tender and soft treatment of his slaves by anyone. The man who has loaned any money has every right to demand back his money. He may even get him arrested for non payment. However, Islam requires of a Muslim that he should not look at money alone how much is lost and what is expected-but he should remember how much Allah loves him to be tender and mild towards one of His slaves. There is no limit to the pleasure of Allah at such times so He will recompense him on the Day of Resurrection with tenderness and mildness.

Virtue of Seeing To Another Muslim's Needs

We are told in another *Hadith* that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

مَنْ كَانَ فِيْ حَاجَةِ اَخِيْهِ كَانَ اللهُ فِيْ حاجتِهِ (ابو داود، كتاب الادب، باب المواخاة)

"The time a person spends in helping his brother get his needs fulfilled. Allah will go on fulfilling the helper's needs. (Abu Dawood. Book al-Adab)

Allah will get his needs fulfilled for him as long as he is occupied in helping his brother with his needs It is as though he says, "You go on helping My slave, I will continue to help you".

کار ساز ما بساز کارِ ما
فکرِ ما در کارِ ما آزارِ ما

There is one more saying of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

مَنْ فَرَّجَ عَنْ مُسْلِمٍ كُرْبَةً فَرَّجَ اللهُ عَنْهُ كُرْبَةً مِنْ كُرَبِ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ (حوالہ بالا)

"As for him who alleviates a Muslim's hardship. Allah will remove for him a hardship out of the several on the Day of Resurrection"

(Abu Dawood. Kitab ul-Adab)

Show Mercy To The Creatures

The truth is that one can do both these things helping someone with his needs and alleviating his hardship only when he loves the creatures of Allah and shows mercy to them. If anyone does that to show off and earn fame then his deed is of no value. His deeds are of value only if he treats them well because they are the servants of Allah and His creatures, and his good treatment of them will please Allah Who will grant him

reward for that. If a person hopes to love Allah, he must love His slaves too, and if he does not love them then it means that he does not love Allah. The following saying of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is reproduced in a *Hadith*

اَلرَّاحِمُوْنَ يَرْحَمُهُمُ الرَّحْمٰنُ اِرْحَمُوْا مَنْ فِى الْاَرْضِ يَرْحَمُكُمْ مَنْ فِى السَّمَآءِ (ابو داؤد، كتاب الادب، باب الرحمه)

"Those who are merciful have mercy shown them by the Compassionate One. If you show mercy to those who are on the earth He Who is in heaven will show mercy to you". (Abu Dawood. Kitab ul-Adab)

So, until we do not show mercy to the creatures of Allah, we will not be entitled to be called Muslims. How can we hope for the mercy of Allah if we do not show mercy to His creatures. It is a demand of faith that we love Allah's slaves and creatures.

Majnun Loves The Edifices Of Layla's City

If anyone loves someone dearly then he loves everything connected with his beloved. He, the *Majnun*, tells his beloved, the *Layla*

اَمُرُّ عَلَى الدِّيَارِ دِيَارِ لَيْلٰى
اُقَبِّلُ ذَا الْجِدَارِ وَ ذَا الْجِدَارِ

"When I pass by the houses, the city of Layla,
"I kiss this wall now, and that wall now".
Why is it so?

وَمَا حُبُّ الدِّيَارِ شَغَفْنَ قَلْبِيْ
وَلٰكِنَّ حُبُّ مَنْ سَكَنَ الدِّيَارَ

"Love of the city will not kill the fire in my heart
But, I love her who lives in the city".

When this happens that a *majnun* loves a *layla,* then what stops one who loves Allah from loving His creatures. How is it that one claims to love Allah but does not have links with His creatures, does not show mercy to them and does not love them?

Can Love For Allah Be Less Than Love For Layla

In his Mathnavi, Mawlana Rumi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ says that *majnun* loved *layla* to such an extent that he even loved the dog of her city. He argued, "It is the dog of my beloved's city. I love it too." He says:

عشقِ مولیٰ کے کم از لیلیٰ بود
گوئے گشت بہر او اولیٰ بود

O, the love of the Master became lesser than the love of Layla

The earthlings are mortal and not lasting yet one does fall in love with them to such an extent that one comes to love their dog too. If that is so, then Allah is the King of kings and He is the Most Beloved of all, it is the right of His love that all His creatures be loved even the animals. This is why *Shari'ah* has given rights to animals too. It has asked us to show mercy to them and should not be cruel to them.

A Dog Is Given Water To Drink

The *Hadith* Book of *Bukhari* has recorded an incident of a prostitute who had spent all her life in sin. She came across a dog who was very thirsty and tried to quench his thirst by licking at the mud. There was a well close by. The woman took out her leather socks and drew out the water from the well and watered the dog with it. Allah liked her deed very much and forgave her for that. "You loved my

creation and showed mercy to it, then We are more entitled to show mercy to you". Therefore, we must deal mercifully with the creatures of Allah, even the animals.

Another Case Of Showing Mercy To The Creation

The respected Maulana Masih ullah Khan, my Shaikh, was blessed with a unique temperament in showing mercy to animals. Leave aside killing an animal, he never raised a hand to shoo away an animal. As a creature of Allah, it deserved that treatment and should not be mistreated. He was so particular about it that once he had a wound on his feet and flies sat on it. On the face of it, this is unhygienic and it intensifies the wound but my Shaikh did not drive away the flies. He carried on with his chores in the normal manner. Meanwhile, someone visited him and requested that he be allowed to drive away the flies from the wound. Quick was the reply, "Brother! They are doing their job. Let me do mine." The reason he did not unsettle the flies was that they were the creation of Allah, "Why should I make them uneasy by driving them away from here?" In other words, we can love Allah truly if we also love His creatures, and have mercy on them.

A Unique Case Of Compassion On A Fly

My Shaikh, Mawlana Doctor Abdul Hayy رحمة الله عليه, often related this incident. There was a great religious man an eminent scholar and a recognized authority on *Hadith* and exegesis. He spent his life in teaching and writing and had vast knowledge. When he died, someone saw him in a dream and asked him how he had fared. He said, "I am grateful to Allah for bestowing His mercy on me. But, it has been very surprising with me! I had worked much for

Islam, by the grace of Allah, had engaged myself in teaching, had delivered sermons and speeches, had penned down many looks and had diffused religious teachings with a missionary zeal. I had hoped that these things will be recalled at the time of reckoning and that Allah will reward me for these services. But, when I was brought before Allah, he said, 'I have forgiven you but do you know why?' I thought of all those things that I had done and supposed it was because of them. However, Allah said, 'No! I have forgiven you for another reason. One day you were writing down'. In those days the quill was used and it was dipped in ink before writing 'You put your pen in the ink but before you could bring it back a fly sat on it and suck the ink. You stopped yourself from bringing out the quill so that the fly, could quench its thirst. That was a sincere show of love for Me and My creature. You had no other motive. Go! In reward for that, I have forgiven you, today".

Tasawwuf Is Really Service To The Creatures

This is a very sensitive path. As long as one does not love Allah's creatures, he is not true in his claim that he loves Allah. Mawlana Rumi says about *tasawwuf*

ز تسبیح و سجاده و دلق نیست
طریقت بجز خدمت خلق نیست

"The rosary, the prayer rug and the darwesh's gown is not *Tasawwuf*, but service to His creation is!"

Allah has said, "If you really love Me then love My creatures. Serve them."

Allah Loves His Creatures

Allah loves his creation dearly. We can find that out easily. If anyone creates something by his own hands anything, even something carved out of stone-then the-creator loves what he has produced; he put in some time in fashioning it and laboured over it. It is his pride possession. In the same way, Allah created this creation and gave it life, so He loves it. We too must love His creation if we love Him.

A Unique Incident In The Life Of Hazrat Nuh (Noah) عليه السلام

When the flood came over the people of Hazrat Nuh عليه السلام and they perished because of that, Allah commanded him through a revelation that he should cast pottery utensils. So, he obeyed Allah and began to mould untensils of pottery and earthenware. He was occupied in that all the time, day or night. Many days passed in this manner, and a lot of untensils accumulated. He received a second command. "Now smash down the utensils, one by one". Hazrat Nuh عليه السلام pleaded before the Lord, "O Allah! I have taken great pains to create them. And I had done that at your command; now you command me to break them up!" Allah said, "My command now is that you break them all." So, Hazrat Nuh عليه السلام broke them up but was broken hearted that he had taken great pains to create them and was asked to undo his effort. Allah said to him, "O, Nuh, you fashioned the earthenware with your hands at My command. You became very attached to these untensils so when I commanded you to break them, it was a very difficult task for you to obey. So you wished to preserve them somehow because they were moulded by you and you loved them. But, you did not observe Me. I had created all the creation with My Hands

but on your suggestion, I destroyed all of them My creatures! You had said:

رَبِّ لَا تَذَرْ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ مِنَ الْكٰفِرِيْنَ دَيَّارًا (سورة نوح: ٢٦)

My Lord, leave not of the disbelievers any dweller on the earth. (Surah Nuh, 71:26)

You said that much and I destroyed what I had created myself."

The implication was that Hazrat Nuh عليه السلام had moulded the utensils out of the earth that he had not created. Then, he had not fashioned the utensils of his own will but was commanded by Allah to do so. In spite of that he came to love them, so did he not realize that Allah loves His creatures dearly? If that is so then he too will have to love Allah's creatures if he loves Allah.

Maulana Doctor Abdul Hayy رحمة الله عليه Used to Say

Maulana Doctor Abdul Hayy رحمة الله عليه used to relate his experience about our supplication to Allah that He cause us to love Him. He said: At such times, I feel that Allah says: "you wish to love Me but you have not seen Me so you cannot love Me directly. You cannot have with Me a relationship that one has with what one sees. Yet if you wish to have a relationship with Me then I have created My slaves on earth to stand for Me and you must love them and show mercy to them. Be tender to them. You will grow love for Me, thereby. This itself is the way to love Me."

If we imagine that we love Allah but deride His creatures as despised and lowly and if we look at them with scorn and consider them evil and inferior then this is a sign that we do not love Allah really. Our so called love for Him is unreal. This is because if anyone loves Allah, he will surely love His creation. This is why the Holy

Prophet ﷺ said, "If anyone is engaged in helping his brother get his needs, then Allah gets this man's needs fulfilled. If any person removes a Muslim brother's anxiety, Allah will remove his anxiety on the Day of Resurrection."

The Conduct Of Allah's Friends

It has been with all the *Awliya* (the friends of Allah) رحمة الله عليه that they were pained when they saw the creatures in a bad condition. When they saw these people in sin and corrupt behaviour they hated the sins because it is obligatory to hate sin. They hated their corrupt and evil deeds because it is obligatory to hate evil. But, they did not hate the sinful, evil man in their hearts and did not despise him.

An Incident With Junayd Baghdadi رحمة الله عليه

Junayd Baghdadi رحمة الله عليه was walking along the banks of the Tigris when a boat appeared in the river close to him. It carried some youngsters who looked like vagabonds. They were singing songs. In every situation when a group of young men sing and have fun, they do not fail to ridicule a religious man who happens to be there. Accordingly, these young men lived upto the reputation of naughty boys and they made fun of the respected Junayd Baghdadi رحمة الله عليه. They also passed some nasty remarks on him. There was another man with him who asked him to curse them because at the same time as committing a sin by singing and frolicking they made fun of Allah's friends. Junayd Baghdadi رحمة الله عليه immediately raised his hands in prayer, "O, Allah, you have granted happiness to these young men in this world. Make their deeds such that they get happiness in the Hereafter too." Observe! He did not despise them; they

were creatures of his Allah.

Love and Compassion Of The Prophet ﷺ For His *Ummah*

The Holy Prophet ﷺ was described as *mercy to the worlds*. When the unbelievers rained rocks on him and hit him with stones, his feet bled profusely but he kept on saying

اَللّٰهُمَّ اهْدِ قَوْمِیْ فَاِنَّهُمْ لَا یَعْلَمُوْنَ

"O Allah! Guide my people for they know not."

"They do not know me and behave in this way out of ignorance, so, O Allah guide them."

As far as the deeds of the unbelievers were concerned, he hated them much but as far as the disbelievers were concerned themselves, he did not hate them. He seemed to say, "Their person in the capacity of a human being is the creature of my Allah. And, I love the creatures of my Allah."

Do Not Hate The Sinner

We must understand that if we do not hate morally corrupt behaviour and sinful activity then that itself is a sin. We must hate sin, and we must consider it bad. But we must not despise the person who is committing the sin. We must not hate him. Rather, we must have pity on him. It is just like a patient visiting a doctor. Now, the doctor will not get angry on him for becoming ill but he will have pity on him and he will treat him with medicine. He will also pray for him, "O Allah! Cure him of the illness.." We must deal in the same way with a sinner. While we hate and despise their behaviour, we must not look down upon them. Rather, they should be loved because they are creatures of Allah and we must pray for them that Allah guide them to the right path.

A Unique Incident Of Forgiveness Gained By A Merchant

A *Hadith* tells us that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said. "A person was brought before Allah." We may explain here that everyone will be brought before Allah on the Day of Resurrection when the reckoning will take place, but there might be an example of that which is depicted beforehand. Anyway, that man was presented before Allah. The Prophet ﷺ continued. "Allah instructed the Angels to look into the Record of his deeds and see what all he had done. The Angels found out that his Record deeds was almost without any piety and virtue. He had not observed Salat, Fasting or any other worship; he had occupied himself completely in his business transactions. Allah knows already the situation and the position of all His slaves but he asks the Angels that the reality may be known to other people, so he asked the Angels again to see well if there was at all any other pious deed in his Record of deeds. The Angles looked again and confirmed that he had performed a righteous deed. Although he had not performed any particular pious deed, he had instructed his slaves through whom he exported his merchandise that if they encounter anyone in hardship they should be tolerant with him. If they had sold the ware to such a man on credit then they should not be hard on him for payment. Rather, they should forgive him if necessary. Consequently, this was his regular practice all his life. He gave respite to anyone in straitened circumstances and he did not hesitate to forgive him if there was such a situation. Allah remarked to them that he forgave His slaves too! He said that if that was so, He was more entitled to forgive him, and He commanded the Angels to pardon him and send him to Paradise." Thus, Allah loves very much that we

forgive and pardon His slaves.

Mercy Over-ruled Law

We must know that in the foregoing case mercy superseded the law. This case is not a precedent but it is an extra-ordinary case lest anyone suppose that he might neglect his duties of *Prayer*, *Fasting*, *zakah*, and not refrain from sin but go on forgiving people and hope for forgiveness on the Day of Resurrection. This is a wrong approach. In this case the mercy of Allah is dominant and His mercy is not bound by a procedure. He may forgive whom He will and show mercy to whom He will. The procedure for us to follow is that we must observe our duties, the *fard* obligations must be met and we must keep away from sin. It is wrong for anyone to neglect the *fard* and to go on sinning yet hope to attain Paradise on the basis of any one deed because that is not the law of Allah. The man who obtained forgiveness on the basis of only one deed may have been driven by deeply sincere motives which we do not know and cannot fathom but which attracted the mercy of Allah to him and got him His forgiveness. It is not a procedure for us to adopt.

A Child Abuses A King

In order to explain the likes of the foregoing case, Mawlana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه has narrated an incident of child using expletives against a king. He has recalled that there was a Nizam of Hyderabad Deccan. His minister once invited him to his house. When the Nawab entered the house, a son of the minister was playing there. It was the nawab's habit to tease children and play with them and he pulled the ears of the child. The child was very brave and, besides, how do children know what a king or nawab is? He

cast a glance at the man who had pulled his ears and abused him. The minister heard his son useing the swear word on the Nawab and was terribly frightened for his son's safety. The Nawab's word was law. What will become of his son? So, to show his faithfulness to the king, the minister drew out his sword and announced that he would behead his son who had shown rudeness to the Nawab. But, the Nawab stopped him saying, "No! He is only a child. He is an intelligent child. He is self-respecting and one who will not give in if anyone pulls his ears. He can fight for himself and is confident too. Now, you will get a regular monthly scholarship for him." So, a scholarship was presented to the boy. The scholarship was called *Wazifah Dushnam* (scholarship for using expletives).

At this point, Mawlana Ashraf Ali Thanavi رحمة الله عليه has said. "If you go now and abuse the Nawab in the hope that you too will get a scholarship, that would be foolish. No one would do it. This was a peculiar situation: The Nawab had been impressed by the child and it was a display of the King's generosity in that situation. It is not a general procedure that everyone who abuses the Nawab gets a scholarship. If anyone does that, he may get a severe beating and may be imprisoned or may be beheaded."

It is the same thing with the benevolence and generosity of Allah. He gives someone on one pretext and someone else on yet another pretext. He approves a behaviour in a man and another behaviour in another man. His mercy knows no limits or conditions or procedure. He has said ورحمتي وسعت كل شيء "My mercy prevails over everything" (al-A'raf 7:157). Therefore no one suffers injustice but, sometimes, a man is blessed with mercy against a deed that Allah comes to like.

Do Not Underrate Piety

We can draw one conclusion from this discussion that no piety is too little. Allah may grant approval to any virtuous act the result of which would spell out tremendous success to the doer of the act. Therefore, we must not consider any act of piety insignificant but, at the same time, it is wrong to rest on hope alone neglecting obligations of *prayer*, *zakah*, and so on. It is wrong to cite an instance of Allah forgiving anyone for anything done out of the ordinary (although he may have been a sinner all his life). We have the *Hadith* of the Prophet ﷺ "The helpless man is he who has allowed himself to follow his desires and does what he likes. He does not wait to see if what he does is lawful or forbidden, proper or wrong but relies on hope that Allah is Forgiving, Merciful who will forgive all sins. We must draw a proper conclusion from these incidents."

Forgiven For Being Mild to the Slaves Of Allah

The Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported in a *Hadith* to have said, "Among the peoples who have passed away before you was a man given to softness in business transactions. He was not inflexible in his dealings. It was his habit that he quoted a price to his customer and if he requested for a reduction in price, this man obliged the customer saying to himself that he would do with a smaller profit margin. He was equally mild when buying something. When the seller quoted a price, he requested him just once to make a reduction and then paid the agreed price. He never argued with the seller and never insisted to give him a concession. He was again soft in asking for his rights. For instance, if he had to receive payment against a debt, he was soft and mild and often told the debtor that if he did not have the

money then he might repay later. When this man was presented before Allah in the Hereafter, Allah said about him, 'Because he treated My slaves kindly so I too would treat him with kindness.' So, Allah forgave him." We see from this example too that Allah likes very much if anyone treats His slaves with kindness and if he gives respite to those in straitened circumstances.

The Practice Of The Holy Prophet ﷺ

It was the practice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that all his life he gave more than whatever was due from him in buying and selling transactions. In those days, coins of silver and gold were in circulation and they were of various denomination. They were not counted but weighed and payments were made according to weight. According to a *Hadith*, the Holy Prophet ﷺ bought something from the market. When he paid for it in dirhams, he asked the man who was weighing the coins زِنْ وَارْجِحْ "Weigh till it tilts." In other words, "Give him some more dirham than are due on me." Yet another *Hadith* tells us خِيَارُكُمْ اَحْسَنُكُمْ قَضَاءً "The best among you are those who when they repay the rights of other people give them in a good manner," that is, they give a little more, not less. For instance, if someone has to repay a hundred rupees, he pays a hundred and ten. Further, the debtor, or giver of rights, must not bother the other person by making false promises. All these things tell us that we must be prompt at paying out debts and giving the rights of other people in a fair manner.

Instructions Of Imam Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه

Imam Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه is our leader in *fiqh* (jurisprudence). We follow his Rulings. He has left instructions for his students. He has written in his will,

"when you engage in a buying and selling transaction with anyone then pay him more than what is due to him. Do not pay less." This is the *sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It is with us that we have memorized a few particular practices on which we act although these things that we have narrated are also part of his *sunnah* and we must conduct ourselves according to them too. May Allah cause us to practice accordingly. *Aameen.* It is in connection with this *sunnah* that the Prophet ﷺ said:

وَمَنْ يَسَّرَ عَلٰى مُعْسِرٍ يَسَّرَ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْاٰخِرَةِ

> "As for one who makes things easy for the straitened, Allah will make it easy for him in the world and the Hereafter."

The removing of difficulties in the Hereafter is what matters really but we can say from experience that such man finds his anxiety removed for him in this world too.

Those Who Amass Wealth & Hoard It Are Cursed

We are told in a *Hadith* that an Angel makes the following supplication to Allah every day:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اَعْطِ مُمْسِكًا تَلَفًا

> "Allah! Let his wealth perish who hoards wealth, counting and recounting it. And let his wealth perish who withholds his hands from spending."

Therefore, as a result of this curse, his wealth is destroyed. It falls into the hands of thieves or bandits or there is a loss of some kind or the other. If nothing like this happens, there is a withdrawal of blessing and a fall of curse on it. His wealth may be much in count but in terms of purchasing power it would be too little. He may have a lot

of money but he may face illness of family members and consequent medical bills. He may face differences among family members so that he does not live a peaceful life.

Supplication For Those Who Spend Money

The Angel prays to Allah for one who spends money

وَاعْطِ مُنْفِقًا خَلَفاً

" O Allah! Give him who spends something in place of it." He is the one who spends in Allah's way, gives charity, deals well with people or helps someone with his wealth. People like him get their reward in the world itself. Those people who spend in this way seem to others as growing less rich but the money they spend does not really lessen their wealth. In fact it brings to them blessings from Allah Who gives them something in its place. We have yet to see anyone become a pauper because he gives more in *sadaqah* (or charity) or treats other people kindly. It never happens in that way but Allah surely gives him a return. This is borne out by the *Hadith*: "Allah makes things easy for him in the world and in the Hereafter."

To Conceal The Secrets Of Other People

The third expression that we read in this *Hadith* is

وَمَنْ سَتَرَ مُسْلِمًا سَتَرَهُ اللّٰهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

"He who conceals the secrets of a Muslim, Allah will conceal his secrets on the Day of Resurrection."

If anyone comes to know of a Muslim's faults, he should not go on publicising it everywhere but he should keep his secret to himself. He should conceal it and not reveal it to anyone else. This procedure is adopted when no one else is at risk of harm at his hands but when

someone is liable to come to harm then the secret must be revealed. Thus, for instance, if one comes to know of a man conspiring to kill someone, he must not conceal the secret but he should let it be known because it is not correct for him to conceal the conspiracy. If no one is likely to come to harm then not only must he conceal the other man's secret but he must also pray for him: "O Allah! Bring this man out of his sinful habit by Your mercy."

It is necessary for us that we must not look for defects in other people and if we come to know of them then we must not attempt to make them known to other people. It is a failing in us that we cannot keep quiet about the things we come to know of other people. We think that we are justified in publicising another man's faults although the truth is that it is a sin to do that.

To Ridicule Another For A Sin

The Holy Prophet ﷺ is quoted to have said in a *Hadith*

مَنْ عَيَّرَ اَخَاهُ بِذَنْبٍ قَدْ تَابَ مِنْهُ لَمْ يَمُتْ حَتّٰى يَعْمَلَهُ (ترمذی، کتاب صفة القيامة، باب نمبر ٥٤)

"If anyone reviles his brother for a sin that he has already repented then he will not die before he has committed it himself." (Tirmizi. Book Sifatul Qiyamah. Chapter # 54)

Allah does not like at all the behaviour of a man who blames anyone naughtily for a sin of which he has sought forgiveness and repented for it. Allah says, "I have concealed the fault of the man and forgiven him. I have deleted the sin from his Record of deeds, then who are you to raise an objection and to revile him for that? If you will remind him of that scornfully then I will recoil it on you and you will commit the same sin." To publish a Muslim's faults is a grave sin.

Allah has not appointed you supervisors over other people that you point out their defects, rather, you are slaves of Allah.

Think Of Yourselves

You must think of yourselves and look at your own shortcomings. When Allah helps anyone look at his own defects then he does not observe the defects of other people. Only those people see the faults of other people who do not care to see their own faults and are negligent in reforming themselves. If anyone is ill himself, he will not worry whether someone else has a cold or catarrh. So, it is a grave crime to seek faults in anyone else, spy on him and publicise it. This is what the Prophet ﷺ said in the *Hadith*. It does not behove a Muslim to do it, and he must refrain from these sins. Unless he does so, he cannot be a true Muslim.

The Excellence Of Learning Religious Knowledge and The Good Tidings

The fourth expression is:

وَمَنْ سَلَكَ طَرِيْقًا يَلْتَمِسُ فِيْهِ عِلْمًا سَهَّلَ اللهُ لَهٗ بِه طَرِيقًا الى الْجَنَّة

"And he who treads the path in search of knowledge Allah makes that path easy leading to Paradise."

This sentence brings good tidings for all of us. May Allah inspire us to be worthy of that. *Aameen*. If anyone covers a distance with the aim of gaining knowledge of religion then Allah makes for him the path to Paradise easy. This distinction will be available to anyone who walks to learn even one question about religion for instance, he may go to ask for a Ruling from a Mufti.

Our Predecessors Preserved The Knowledge With Labour

We cannot match the effort put in by our predecessors to seek knowledge. We sit in comfort of our homes and read a book and then deliver a speech on it. Our predecessors went without food. they had sparse comforts and they took great pains and sacrificed much to collect and preserve the knowledge for us. If they had not worked as hard, the sayings of the Prophet ﷺ would not have been preserved for us in this manner. They have gone away after preserving for us every little behaviour of our beloved Prophet ﷺ. This will be there for everyone who comes into this world until the Day of Resurrection. They have left for us a beacon light.

A Long journey Undertaken To Learn A *Hadith*

There is a report in *Bukhari* about Hazrat Jabir رضی اللہ عنہ a very close companion of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He was an Ansar. One day after the death of the Prophet ﷺ he learnt about *Hadith* on the virtues of *Tahajjud Salat* that he had not heard himself but another companion had learnt it directly from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. That companion رضی اللہ عنہ was residing at Damascus in Syria, at that time. He was not satisfied that he had *Hadith* through indirect sources but wished to get it direct from that companion. He enquired and found out that the companion he liked to meet was in Damascus. He himself lived in Madinah. The distance between the two cities was about 1500 kilometers. I have travelled by that road myself and the entire path is through a desert there being no tree or water throughout. Hazrat Jabir رضی اللہ عنہ called for a camel at that very moment and rode it all the way to Damascus. He located the man he had come to meet and knocked at

the door of his house. The companion رضی الله عنه opened the door and asked him why he had come. Hazrat Jabir رضی الله عنه said, "I have learnt that you have heard a *Hadith* from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ directly and have come to you to hear it from you." He asked. "Have you come here from Madinah only to get the *Hadith*?." "Yes! I have come for no other purpose but that." The companion said, "I will narrate that *Hadith* to you but before that let me narrate to you another *Hadith* that I have heard from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ:

> If anyone treads a path to secure knowledge of the religion of Allah then Allah makes the path to Paradise easy for this man.

After relating to him this *Hadith*, the Companion narrated to him the *Hadith* about the *Tahajjud Salat* that Hazrat Jabir رضی الله عنه came to learn. He then invited him into the house to rest awhile and have meal with him but Hazrat Jabir رضی الله عنه said, "No! I will not eat because I wish to dedicate my entire journey to the *Hadith* of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and do not wish to do anything else during this hourney. I have got the *Hadith* and my purpose is served. I go back to Madinah. As-salam alaykum."

Form An Intention To Learn When You Come Here

We have seen that he undertook a long journey for the sake of *Hadith*. This is only one example that I have told you about. The lives of the Companions, their successors and the successors of the second generation-the companions and the epigones-are replete with examples of the long journeys they undertook to obtain religious knowledge and collect the *Ahadith*. The result is that we enjoy the fruit of

their efforts. These people spent their money, gave their lives and underwent hardships to preserve and disseminate the knowledge. It was through their effort and dedication that they achieved the task but if we had to do it then we would have failed miserably and knowledge would not have been preserved. It is the benevolence of Allah that He created those people in order that they might preserve religion for the generations following them. It is the grace of Allah, and His favour that the religion is safe. Books are available and teachers and students are engaged in disseminating knowledge of religious topics. All you have to do is to go to them and learn. You may ask them questions, too.

This *Hadith* gives glad tidings to those who seek religious knowledge. We too gather here to teach and learn the religion of Allah. Therefore when we leave our homes to attend such gatherings we must form an intention in our minds that we go to learn about religion. May Allah entitle us to the tidings offered by this *Hadith*.

Glad Tidings For Those Who Gather In The House Of Allah

The *Hadith* which is the centre of our discussion gives another glad tiding in the next expression. It says: "a group of people may choose one of the Houses of Allah that is, a mosque and sit there to recite the Qur'an or take lessons from it, talking about the religion of Allah. When they sit in this manner, peace descends on them from Allah and the mercy of Allah envelopes them. The Angels surround them from all sides" which means that the mercy of Allah turns on them and they are the Angels of mercy who pray for them. They seek forgiveness of Allah for them, "O Allah! These people have assembled for your

religion. O Allah! Forgive them through Your mercy. Let your mercy descend on them. Pardon them their sins and cause them to progress in religion."

Remember Allah And Allah Will Remember You

The next expression in the main *Hadith* of this discussion is

وَذَكَرَهُمُ اللهُ فِيْمَنْ عِنْدَهٗ

> "Allah makes a mention of them to those who are close to Him."

These people who are gathered in a House of Allah to remember Allah are remembered by Him in the presence of those who are near to Him. He says to them, "These! My slaves have given up whatever they were doing only for My sake and to remember Me, to talk about Me and to hear about My religion." He tells the Angels around Him about the assembly of His slaves. This is no ordinary thing. It is a great thing.

> "My mention is better than Me because it is made in that Assembly."

Is it an ordinary thing that the Lord makes our mention? It is our duty to remember Him and He even commanded us to remember Him فاذكروني {So, remember Me (*al-Baqarah*, 2:152)} but immediately gave the response and reward for the remembrance اذكركم {I shall remember you, (*al-Baqarah*, 2:152)}. "You will make my mention, I shall mention you." This is being offered to us although we are not worthy of mention. It is the same for Him if he mentions us or ignores us. Nothing will add to His greatness if He mentions us and if we do not mention Him nothing will diminish from His greatness rather even if everyone in the world forsakes it, He will not lose a bit. We are like the tiniest

piece of anything. How do we favour Him if we remember Him but if He remembers us then that is a great favour.

Ubayy bin Ka'b رضی الله عنه Requested To Recite The Qur'an

Hazrat Ubayy bin Ka'b رضی الله عنه was a well-known Companion. Every one of the Companions was distinguished in his own way and Ubayy bin Ka'b رضی الله عنه was distinguished for his excellent recital of the Qur'an. Therefore, the Holy Prophet ﷺ used to say about him اقرئهم ابی بن کعب "Ubayy bin Ka'b is the best of them in reciting the Qur'an." One day, he was among the people seated with the Holy Prophet ﷺ, when the Prophet ﷺ addressed him and said, "Allah has instructed me through Jibril (gabrial) علیه السلام to ask you to recite the Qur'an to me." When he heard the command, Ubayy bin Ka'b رضی الله عنه asked, "Did Allah take my name and instruct you to ask Ubayy bin Ka'b to do that?" The Holy Prophet ﷺ said, "Yes. He took your name when instructing me to listen to your recital." The moment he heard that, Ubayy bin Ka'b رضی الله عنه could not hold himself and wept ceaselessly. Amidst sobs he said, "I am not worthy enough that Allah remembers me and call me by name."

Glad Tidings For Those Who Make Mention Of Allah

If Allah remembers anyone then that is a great blessing for the man. It is such a great blessing and favour that it surpasses all the blessings and wealth of the world. The *Hadith* refers to this great blessing when it says that when people Assemble to learn and listen to the religion of Allah then Allah refers to them in His assembly with the Angels. There is a *Hadith Qudsi*– it is a *Hadith* in

which the Prophet ﷺ quotes the words of Allah and it says that Allah has said:

مَنْ ذَكَرَنِيْ فِيْ نَفْسِهِ ذَكَرْتُهُ فِيْ نَفْسِيْ وَمَنْ ذَكَرَنِيْ فِيْ مَلَاٍ ذَكَرْتُهُ فِيْ مَلَاٍ خَيْرٍ مِنْهُ

"If anyone remembers Me when he is alone, I remember him Myself. And if anyone remembers Me among others, I remember him among others more superior than them." (Bukhari and Muslim)

So, when a person remembers Allah to himself, Allah remembers Him by Himself and when a person mentions Allah to other people, Allah mentions him to the Angels who are better than those people. This remembrance of Allah is known as *zikr* and a great excellence is attached to it. This includes all people who are engaged in teaching or learning religion and assemble for that purpose. They are included, all of them, in this excellence. May Allah cause us to qualify for this distinction. *Aameen*. Those who assemble to learn religion do not do anything insignificant. It is a rewarding thing by the grace of Allah provided they are sincere and seek the religion of Allah.

High Lineage Is Not Enough For Salvation

The concluding sentence of the *Hadith* is the subject of our discussion is

مَنْ بَطَّأَبِهِ عَمَلُهُ لَمْ يُسْرِعْ بِهِ نَسَبُهُ

"As for him who is slow in doing his deeds, his lineage prevents him from that."

This is also one of the *Jawami ul kalim* (comprehensive brief expressions). It refers to a person who lags behind in deeds and it says that he has lagged behind because his high pedigree prevented him from

being active. His deeds are not good so he cannot go to Paradise and remains behind while other people took quick steps and reached Paradise, a poet has said:

یاران تیز گام نے منزل کو جالیا
ہم محو نالہ جرس کارواں رہے

Those people went ahead while he lagged behind because of his deeds. He could not reform his deeds because of his lineage.

He kept boasting about his descent and was left behind. The message is that we must not rely on our lineage for success in the Hereafter but we must give thought to correcting our behaviour. If descent was helpful then the son of Hazrat Nuh (Noah) علیہ السلام would not have been sent to hell because Hazrat Nuh (Noah) علیہ السلام was a glorious Messenger. He even prayed for the forgiveness of Allah for his son, but Allah said:

اِنَّهٗ عَمَلٌ غَيْرُ صَالِحٍ

"He is of unrighteous conduct."(surah Hud, 11:46)

"Therefore, your prayer for him will not meet My approval." This shows that the real thing that matters is deed, a good deed. Nevertheless, if good deeds are following up with links with a religious man, a mentor then Allah gives help. In spite of that, a man is required to make preparations himself - do righteous deeds, pay attention and be mindful. If anyone neglects these things then merely high lineage will not help. May Allah cause us to rectify our deeds. *Aameen.*

Summary

The summary of this discussion is that it is a corollary of love for Allah and a condition too that we love His creatures. It calls on us to show them mercy and compassion. Unless we do that our claim of love for Allah is without truth. May Allah grow in our hearts love for Him and for His creatures. *Aameen*

And our concluding remark is that all praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the worlds.

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Series: 78

DO NOT DISGRACE THE ULAMA

DARUL ISHAAT URDU BAZAR KARACHI-1

Venue	:	Jameʿ Masjid Baitul-Mukarram, Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Karachi.
Date	:	13th December 1996

DO NOT DISGRACE THE ULAMA

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسنا ومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهد ان سيدنا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده و رسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد!

عن عمر و بن عوف المُزَنى رضى الله تعالى عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم:

اِتقوا زِلةَ العالمِ ولا تقطعوهُ وَانتظرُوا فيئته (مسند الفردوس للديلمى جلد ١ صفحه ٩٥. كنزالعمال حديث نمبر ٢٨٦٨٢)

Praise belongs to Allah, we praise Him, beseech Him for help, and seek His forgiveness, we believe in Him and place our

trust in Him. We seek refuge in Him from the mischief of our souls and from our evil deeds. He whom Allah guides none can mislead and he whom Allah leaves to stray none can guide. And we bear witness that no one is worthy of worship besides Allah, Who is Alone and has no partner. And we testify that sayyidina Muhammad is His slave and Messenger May Allah bless him, his family and Companions, and May He bestow favours and peace, a complete peace!

It is reported by Hazrat Amr bin Awf al Muzani رضی الله عنه that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Fear the fault of a religious scholar, do not sever bonds with him and wait for him to return. (Musnad al Firdaus by Daylmi VI P 95, Kanz ul'umal *Hadith* # 28682)

This *Hadith* is weak as far as the chain of transmission is concerned but it has been unanimously approved in regard to meaning. A religious scholar an 'Aalim is one whom Allah has blessed with religious knowledge including knowledge of the *Qur'an, Hadith* and *Fiqh.* If you find such a man doing something that you know surely to be a sin, and he does it constantly, then you have to do certain things. The first of the things you have to do is that you must not commit the same sin on the plea that you are imitating a Scholor. Rather, you should refrain from that sin and protect yourself from that.

Do not Follow the Ulama in Sinful Deeds

This *Hadith*, in its first message, stops those people from committing a sin who insist on doing it because they have seen a religious scholar do it. They refuse to listen to

reason and point out to the scholar who sins. The Holy Prophet ﷺ cut at the roots of the argument that a scholar is imitated ever in sinful activity. He said that a scholar should not be followed in his wrong behaviour but must be followed in the approved things he does. You must not find courage to commit a wrong on the plea that an 'Aalim is donig it. Will you follow in his footsteps if he is going on the path of Hell? Will you jump in the fire behind him? Certainly you will not conduct yourself in this manner, then why obey him in sinful activity?

The behaviour of an 'Aalim is not Necessarily Reliable

The Ulama (Plural of 'Aalim) have told us that if an 'Aalim is authentic in his field then we may rely on his *fatwa* (ruling), and what he says by the tongue, but it is not necessary that his deeds and his behaviour are reliable. If he does something wrong and you ask him if that behaviour is correct, the scholar will say that it is wrong. Therefore, you may follow the directions and instructions he gives, but not his behaviour. It is wrong to argue that you should do what authentic Ulama have been doing. This argument is tantamount to saying that if eminent people jump in the fire (by their behaviour) so you may also jump into it. Just as this statement is foolish so also the first one is wrong. That is why the Holy Prophet ﷺ said *fear the following of that fault.*

We Must Not Mistrust an 'Aalim

The seconnd thing that you have to do is not to sever relations with the religious scholar. Some people do that immediately they spy a scholar do something wrong or commit a sin. They begin to mistrust him. Some of them

defame him and extend the defamation to all religious scholars and say that the present-day Ulama are like that. This is what the Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said in the second expression of this *Hadith* 'do not sever bonds with him' even if you find a religious scholar committing a sin. The reason for that is explained in the next paragraph.

The Ulama Also Are Human Beings

An 'Aalim or a Religious Scholar is a human being, after all, like any of us. He is created just as we are and he is not an Angel. He harbours the same sentiments as we do. The same desires tempt him as we face and he too has to cope with the evil like we have to. Neither is he innocent and sinless nor is he Prophet and Messenger or an Angel. Rather, he lives in the world and faces the same things as any other man here. There is no evidence that a Religous Scholar should be innocent and sinless and one who will never sin or do wrong. If he is human then it follows that he might err and sin. Therefore, it is wrong to reject him if he is. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said "do not sever ties with him immediately but wait for him to return". He has the true knowledge and there is hope that he will come back to the correct path *Insha Allah.*

Pray For the Ulama

If you pray for him you will get a two-fold reward. You will earn a reward for making a supplication and another for wishing well for a Muslim. Your prayer could be; "O Allah! This man is responsible for diffusion of religious teachings. We learn religious matters from him but the unfortunate man is involved in sin. O Allah! Be Merciful to him and get him out of this evil habit." If your prayer is answered then you will be held responsible for

his reformation and every righteous deed that he does after that will be credited to your Record of deeds also. So, you should not publicise the man's faults and accuse him of being sinful. You will not gain anything by that.

An 'Aalim Who Lags behind in Doing Good Deeds Is Also Entitled To Respect

Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi رحمة الله عليه has said that it is the duty of a Religious scholar to be rightious . But, if an 'Aalim lacks in that field then too he is entitled to respect because of his knowledge. Allah has bestowed on him knowledge for which he enjoys a rank and that rank entitles him to rspect. It is like the respects due to parents which the Qur'an calls upon us to give them.

وَاِنْ جٰهَدَاكَ عَلٰٓى اَنْ تُشْرِكَ بِيْ مَالَيْسَ لَكَ بِهٖ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا
وَصَاحِبْهُمَا فِي الدُّنْيَا مَعْرُوْفًا (سورة لقمان:١٥)

> But if they strive with you to make you associate with Me that whereof you have no knowledge then obey them not, yet you keep honourable company with them in this world.
>
> (Surah Luqman. 31:15)

If the parents are unbelievers or idolators then they must not be obeyed in religion but they are entitled to fair treatment in the world. They have the honour to be someone's parents and that itself calls for their children to respect them. It is wrong for any one to insult them. Similarly, if a religious scholar does not do good deeds, one must pray for him, "O Allah! cause him to be righteous." He should not be disgraced for his lack of righteousness. Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه has advised the Ulama "mere knowledge is nothing unless it is accompanied by deeds". But he also said, "when a

religious scholar comes to me, and although I am aware of his shortcomings I honour and respect him because of his religious knowledge."

Maintain Ties with the Ulama

It has become a habit with people these days to pick up fault with the Ulama and publicise it. They accuse them of wrong and say that it is common with present-day Ulama. They say, "All Ulama are like that". Those people who are irreligious are occupied in this way because until they defame the Ulama and lower them in the eyes of the common man their objective is not served and they cannot mislead the Muslims. They know that once they succeed in breaking the ties of the common man with the Ulama they can play with his sentiments and mislead him. My respected father رحمة الله عليه used to say, "when the flock is separated from the shepherd, the wolf is free to molest them and devour them." So, this is what the irreligious men do and we are not surprised at their behaviour. However, what surprises us is that the men who are religious also indulge in such behaviour. They do not hesitate to blame the Ulama although they gain nothing out of it. They do not consider that once they lower the Ulama in the sight of people, who will teach them their religious duties? The evil will then mislead them into classifying the lawful and unlawful according to their whims and they will be misled. Therefore, although the Ulama are seen to lack righteousness, they should not be insulted. We should pray for them and because they are men of knowledge they will *Insha Allah* come back to the Right Path.

Bandit Turns into Man of Allah

Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi رحمة الله عليه once asked his disciples "why do you follow me? I am just like the so called mentor who was a banit actually. He had observed people throng the haunts of pirs religious mentors paying them great respect and holding them in high esteem. They carried gifts along, kissed their hands and were deeply devoted to them. He said to himself that it was a lucrative occupation and that he unnecessarily risked his life and kept awake in the night to commit robberies. There was always the possibility of being caught and imprisoned. He also had to put in extra effort."

Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi رحمة الله عليه continued. The bandit decided to quit banditry and become a holy man. He thought he would have a large number of disciples who would kiss his hands and bring him gifts. So he stopped committing robberies and built himsilf a *Khanqah* (a sort of sanctuary). He took a rosary and dressed himself like a holy man wearing a long shirt and making-up in the fashion of a mentor. He began to hold sessions of remembrance of Allah (*Zikr*) and chant His praises. People saw him and were much impressed by his appearance. One by one, they began to enrol as his disciples and gradually, he had a very large following. Gifts poured in, charities were brought. His hands were kissed and some even kissed his feet. He would prescribe a different set of recitals to every disciple. Naturally the recitals do have an effect and Allah raises the reciter's ranks. Because the disciples were sincere in their recital, Allah raised their ranks very high and they were able to meditate and look into the hearts of other people.

The Supplication of the Disciples Does work

The Maulana continued his narration: one day, the disciples commented to each other that Allah had granted them a rank and they should now meditate and see how much further it is to the rank of their mentor, how much more they have to travel? They began their exercise and set about to ponder on the status of their benefactor, their Shaikh. But they could not locate him when they meditated on that question. They thought that their Shaikh had attained such a high status that they could not see him in their meditation exercises. So, they approached him and submitted to him Sir! We tried to see your station through meditation but you are so very high that we could not find you. The bandit-turned-Shaikh realised then what he really was and he revealed to his desciples the true story. Weeping. he said to them, " How can I show you what my rank is? I am a bandit! And I have taken up this profession to earn a livelihood and amass wealth. Allah has granted you high stations through your recital Which I continue to wander in the lowest of the low ranks. How then can you find me in the high ranks? I am a bandit, a robber and I do not have anything so please go away from me. Find yourself another mentor'?

When they heard the facts the disciples gathered together and prayed for their shaikh "O Allah! He may be a thief or a bandit. But Allah! whatever you have granted us is because of him. O Allah! Guide him and reform him. Raise his ranks, O Allah!"

These disciples were sincere and pious men. Through the blessings of their supplication Allah forgave him and gave him, too! a high station.

The narration of Maualana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi ends here.

So whenever you hear a derogatory remark passed on a religious scholar do not publicise it. Instead, pray for him. May Allah cause us to behave accordingly *Aameen.*

And our concluding remark is: Praise be to Allah Lord of the worlds.

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Series: 79

RESTRAIN YOUR ANGER

DARUL ISHAAT URDU BAZAR KARACHI

Venue	:	Jame'Masjid Baitul-Mukarram, Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Karachi.
Date	:	11th May, 1997

Restrain Your Anger

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسنا ومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهد ان سيدنا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد !

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطٰن الرجيم بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

عن ابى هريرة رضى الله عنه قال انٰ رجلا قال لرسول الله عليه وسلم اوصنى ولا تكثر على قال" لاَ تَغْضَبْ "(جامع الاصول الكتاب الثالث فى الغضب والغيظ)

Praise belongs to Allah. We praise Him, ask Him for help and seek His forgiveness. And, we believe in Him and place our trust in Him. And, we seek His protection from the mischief of our base souls and from our evil deeds. He whom Allah guides nobody can mislead and he whom

He leaves to stray none can guide. And we bear witness that there is no one worthy of worship besides Allah, Who is Alone and Who has no partner, and we bear witness that Muhammad is His Slave and Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family and companions, and may He shower favours and peace a complete peace, and plenty of it.

Hazrat Abu Hurayrah رضی الله عنه has said that a man asked the Prophet ﷺ, "Give me some instruction but do not make it lengthy." He said, "Do not be angry." (Jami'ul-Usul, Book three-Anger)

According to Abu Hurayrah رضی الله عنه a man presented himself before the Holy Prophet ﷺ and asked him to give him some advice but it must be brief. So while he wants an instruction, he also places a condition that it must not be a long advice but a short one. The Holy Prophet ﷺ acceded to his request and did not show displeasure at the condition the man had placed. The exponents of *Hadith* have commented, that it is not wrong for anyone who asked the Ulama for instructions to place a condition that they should be brief and it is not contrary to etiquette. It is possible that the man might be in a hurry and if he is given a long instruction, he might be delayed and repent having asked. The Holy Prophet ﷺ gave him a very brief instruction لاتغضب "Do not be angry."

Sin is prompted by two things Anger and Lust

If we think over it there are two forces that drive man to sin. They are *anger* and *lust*. Whether a sin pertains to violation of rights of Allah or of fellow men, one of these two things prompts man to sin. Lust stands for the Arabic

word *shahwah* meaning *desires of the soul*. A man may wish to eat something, is a desire of his soul. He may wish to do something unreasonable, that is also a desire of his soul. Why does a man rob someone? He wants to collect wealth and possessions. For the same lust he ogles at women. These are things that his soul desires and makes him commit a sin. Many sins originate because of lust. Many others originate from anger. We will see as we read further that anger leads to innumerable sins. Thus, if we will obey the Prophet ﷺ when he instructs us not to be angry then we will save ourselves from fifty percent of the sins that we commit.

The first step to Self Reformation

Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه has said that the message of this *Hadith "do not be angry"* is an important lesson of *Sufism*, The first step for a man who takes the path of Allah and sets to reform himself is to curb anger.

Anger is Instinctive

As it is, anger is natural to man. There is no man without the instinct of anger. Allah has placed this quality in man for some reason. If man keeps it under control then he saves himself from many difficulties but if he is bereft of the quality of anger then he will never be angry and never defend himself when attacked by an enemy or an animal. So, man is allowed to show anger to protect himself and *shari'ah* has not placed any restriction on that., This quality of anger is given to man for the very purpose of protecting himself, his possessions, his family and his relatives. These are the times when anger is permitted.

Sins that result from anger

However, if a man does not control his anger then he is liable to commit innumerable sins. It is anger that gives rise to arrogance. Again, anger grows jealousy in man. An angry man bears malice and is hostile too. There are plenty of other undesirable traits in a man who is given to anger and who does not control his anger. For example, a man who does not check his anger may hit a subordinate when he is very angry; he will cause the poor fellow much difficulty and use abusive language. These are sinful acts that he commits when he is angry. To beat someone unnecessarily is a grave sin. Similarly, it is a grave sin to abuse someone and the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said about it:

سِبَابُ الْمُسْلِمِ فُسُوْقٌ وَ قِتَالُهُ كُفْرٌ (صحیح بخاری، کتاب الادب، باب ماینھی من السباب واللعن)

"Abusing a Muslim is *fusuq* (an evil act) and killing him is *kufr* (disbelief)." (Bukhari, Book of al-Abad. *Hadith* # 6044)

These things happen when a man is angry. He abuses and taunts another Muslim when he loses his temper and in this way pains him and makes him sad. This is a very sinful behaviour. Thus anger led him to commit a sin.

Anger makes one Spiteful

If the person on whom a man is angry is not his subordinate then the angry man backbites him. This happens when, for instance, a man is angry at someone who is senior to him and he cannot let him know what he has in his mind so he will speak ill of him behind his back. It is thus anger that caused him to backbite. Sometimes, no matter how much he backbites the other man, his anger does not subside and he feels like slapping the man and hurting him but he cannot do it because of the other's seniority. This

is being spiteful. This man is ever prepared to hurt the other and gets pleasure when the other is in difficulty. It is a sinful behaviour and a result of anger.

Jealousy grows from Anger

We have seen that the angry man derives pleasure from the other man's troubles but it also happens that this man sees comfort and happiness. The angry man, then, wishes for his comfort and happiness to be taken away from him. He wishes that whatever gain the other has by way of prosperous business or promotion may be lost to him. He cannot see him happy and prosperous. In other words, he is jealous of him, and we have seen that it is also a result of anger. Thus, a man commits many sins when the person he is angry at is his subordinate or junior and even when he is his superior or senior. Therefore, the sins that he commits are because he cannot control his anger; if he had a control over his anger then he would not have committed so may sins. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said for the very reason, "Do not be angry." We also find in the Qur'an, Allah describes the pious Muslims in these words:

وَالْكَاظِمِيْنَ الْغَيْظَ وَالْعَافِيْنَ عَنِ النَّاسِ (سور آل عمران: ١٣٤)

And restrain their anger, and are forgiving towards mankind. (Al Imran, 3:134)

The pious Muslims do that because one who controls his temper preserves himself from many sins.

An angry person violates Rights of other People

We have stated earlier that two things prompt a man to sin anger and lust. Sins that are committed through lust are also grave but there is always a likelihood that Allah will

forgive the sinner if he repents to Him and seeks His forgiveness from the sins. They are erased from his Record of deeds. On the other hand, sins that are committed in anger often involve violation of rights, of fellow men. This is apparent when an angry man beats the subject of his anger, abuses him or scolds him and causes him pain and grief. In other words he usurps the other man's rights. In the same way, an angry man backbites his victim, shows spite or becomes jealous of him and thus encroaches on his rights. The sin of violation of rights of fellow men results from anger. It is so grave a sin that even if the sinner repents and reforms, his repentance will not be perfect unless he is forgiven by those people whose rights he had violated. Allah says, "When you repent. I will forgive your violation of My rights but I will not forgive your violation of the rights of My slaves unless they forgive you." This thing becomes difficult. How many people will the violator go to and ask for forgiveness and get it? This is why the Holy Prophet ﷺ gave the instruction لاتغضب "Do not be angry."

When a man contorls his anger Allah says, "My slave has restrained his rage so I too will not be angry at him."

Excellent reward on controlling Anger

The gist of the *Hadith* is that a man will be brought before Allah on the Day of Resurrection as part of reckoning. Although Allah knows everything yet He asks for some details that other people may know it too. So, He will ask the Angels to let Him know what piety is recorded in his Record of deeds. The Angels will say, "O Alalh! There are not too many righteous deeds in his Record. He was not given to voluntary effort in worship but there is one thing very prominent in his Record. Whenever anyone trespassed his rights, he was quick to forgive him and if

anyone told him that he could not repay his rights then he asked his subordinates to forgo their demand and pardon him because he did not have the means. In this manner, he gave up his rights." Allah will say, "As this man behaved in a forgiving manner with My slaves and gave up his rights too for them, today I too will deal with him in a forgiving spirit, and I forgive him." So, it is on this basis that Allah forgives the man.

The effort of the son of Shah Abdul Quddus Gangohi رحمة الله عليه

It is with this in mind that our religious mentors prescribed restraining anger as the first exercise after repentance to anyone who approached them for guidance and reforming. They asked the seekers to go through tremendous effort to restrain anger.

Shaikh Abdul Quddus Gangohi رحمة الله عليه was a very eminent man of Allah, a *saint.* People came to him from different places of the world to seek advice and to reform themselves at his hands. But, his own son did not regard him with esteem. Father is there at home and everyone visits him to seek his blessings but the son is unconcerned. He is occupied in idle pursuit. It happens often that an elder man in the family is valued only after his death. So, when he died, his son opened his eyes and realised his mistake. He said to himself. "I lost a great opportunity while everyone else took advantage of my father's blessings. I sought nothing."

He sought out someone who visited his father regularly and reformed himself and received blessings from him more than anyone else. He hoped to earn and regain some blessings for himself from that man. He learnt that a holy man who suited these qualifications lived in Balkh

while he lived in Gangoh in the United Provinces (India). So, he decided to go there and informed the holy man that he would visit him. That man awaited the son of his Shaikh outside the city together with his retinue. He received him with a warm welcome and brought him home. He arranged exceptional meals for him and treated him very well, The guest son of his Shaikh said to him after a couple of days, "you have treated me with much love and affection and honoured me highly but truly I have come with some other purpose." He asked him to name the purpose of his visit. He said, "My respected elder, I want to receive from you some of the blessings you derived from my father because I failed to gain anything from him while he was alive." His father's disciple and his own mentor said, "O, so you have come for that purpose. Well, from now on there will be no hospitality for you. You will not be given special treatment and no choice meals will be served to you. From now on, you will stay next to the *Hammam* (bathrooms) situated near the mosque. You will have to sleep there. You will have to burn the fire and heat the water for the *Hammam* and collect the fuel for the fire-wood and garbage." It was the winter season and water had to be heated for the worshippers to perform ablution. The son was told that he had to do all that and nothing more. No recital was prescribed for him. What a fall from the honourable reception to the task appointed for him!

Remedy For Arrogance

Because he had come with a sincere intention, he followed the directions of his mentor and took up the duties at the bathrooms. For a period of time his duties included observance of the five daily *Salats* and looking after the bathrooms of the mosque. The holy man knew that such young men had in them nobility and purity of

heart but they also had a semblance of pride and conceit, a drawback that was attached to them surely, it had to be cured. So, he was given a task that would remedy the ill. After some days, the mentor decided to find out whether he still had the germs of pride in him the-image of a prince-or not. To do this he chose to use the sweepress who cleaned his house. He instructed her that she should walk close to the man appointed at the baths when she had collected the garbage and let him know if he said anything to her. She did as directed. The moment she walked close enough to him, he exploded in anger, "How dare you walk close to me! I am not at Gangoh otherwise I would have taught you a lesson." She reported the reaction to the Shaikh who concluded that his student was yet raw and still had to improve so, his duties at the bath continued further.

The Second Trial

After some more days, the sweepress was again instructed to walk close to him with the garbage in her hands, and she was told to walk very close this time. She followed the instructions and walked very close to him. The young man stared at her in anger but uttered not a word. She reported to the Shaikh what had passed. He saw that the treatment was having its effect.

The Third Trial

When some more days had gone by, the Shaikh instructed the sweepress to walk close to him once again and keep close enough for the garbage basket to touch him and for some of the garbage to drop on him. She was very close to him, dropping a little garbage on him but he did not even glance at her. She told the mentor what had transpired

and he commented that they were succeeding in the treatment.

The Fourth Trial

Once again, the Shaikh sent the sweepress to his disciple, the son of his own Shaikh. Some days had passed since he had been tried the third time. The sweepress was asked to repeat her performance with the added act that she should tumble down before him dropping the basket full of garbage on the young man. "Let me know how he reacts," the Shaikh said. The sweepress stumbled just as she was close enough to empty her basket on him. As she fell down, the young disciple did not bother about his own condition but aided her if she had hurt herself. She recalled before the Shaikh what happened and the Shaikh expressed hope of success in reforming the young man.

A Great Trial And Inward Reward

After that, another incident took place. The Shaikh was in the habit of going on hunting trips; he had hunting dogs with him. Naturally, he must have seen some wisdom in that from a religious point of view. Besides, it is permitted to hunt with the help of the hunting dogs. So, when he went on one such trip he took the young man along and appointed him to hold the chain of one of the hunting dogs. The dog was strong and fat, and this poor fellow was thin and hungry. When the dogs spied the hunt they ran but this young man could not keep pace and fell down. However, he did not let go of the chain because his master had forbidden him to release his grip on the chain. The result was that he was being pulled by the dog and he bled profusely but did not go against the command of his Shaikh. He did not release the chain.

After this incident, the Shaikh saw his own mentor, Shaikh Maulana Abdul Quddus Gangohi رحمة الله عليه in his dreams. He told him, "I had not put you to that much trouble." Only a father cares for his children! In the morning, the Shaikh summoned the young Gangohi and embraced him and he said to him, "I had received a wealth from your father and you had asked me for it. I had held it as a trust for you and have returned it to you. The way that I have followed was the only one to hand over the trust so I followed it."

Restrain Anger and overtake the Angels

We have seen that when the young man approached the Shaikh he was not asked to follow a recital pattern or pursue a set of devotional exercises but he was asked to menial work that removed pride from his mind. He was taught to deal fairly with the slaves of Allah and to restrain anger, the cause of pride. Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه has said that the first lesson in *suluk* and *tasawwuf,* and the first step to *Sufism* is to check anger and to give it up. When a man has a full control over anger, Allah raises him up to such stations that even the Angels envy him. The Angels never get angry because they lack the charactereistic of anger, and they are always engaged in worship. If they do not cause anyone any difficulty it is not something worth marveling. Allah says. "I have created them with that quality. But I have put in the son of Adam the quality of anger. So, if, out of My fear and love, he restrains his anger, he progresses ahead of the Angels."

An incident in the life of Imam Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه

Imam Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه is the jurist whose school of thought we follow. He is well-known and has a following all over the world. During his time there were many people jealous of him. Allah had blessed him with a high station, renown, knowledge and a large following. The result was that he also had many who were jealous of him, and because they were jealous they spoke ill of him behind his back and were rude to him also. One day while he was going home, someone walked along with him and abused him continuously. When they had walked some distance, they came to a crossing and their destinations stood on different paths. Imam Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه stood at the corner of the street and spoke his first words to the man, "My house is situated on this street while you have to go on the other side, so I will stop here for sometime to allow you to finish what you have to say. May be you still have to hurl more abuses on me. Please do that. After you have said all you want to say, I will go to my house. along this street." This incident is recorded in relevant books.

Ablution of *Isha* was intact Upto *Fajr* a Period of forty years

My shaikh, Maulana Masih ullah Khan رحمة الله عليه told us that Imam Abu Hanifa رحمة الله عليه used to perform ablution for his Isha *Salat* and remained in the state of ablution until he had offered the Fajr *Salat*. This has an unusual begining. He was not used to do it always. In the beginning, he would get up in the last part of the night to offer *Tahajjud* but one day, while he was walking along, an old woman remarked, "He is the one who prays the *Fajr* and *Isha* with the same ablution. On hearing this, he

felt ashamed and said to himself, "This woman holds an opinion about me that I offer the *Isha* and *Fajr Salat* with the same ablution but I do not do that. I am being praised for what I am not." He resolved that very day to qualify himself for those words the rest of his life. So, he made it a rule of his life to engage in worship after *Isha* until the *Fajr Salat* and in this way offer the two distant *Salat* with a single ablution.

This did not mean that he slept all day because he was engaged in worship all night. He had his own business to look after and he also conducted lessons on religious matters. People visited him to learn from him. He worshipped Allah all night, gave lessons on the Qur'an after *Fajr Salat* and then looked after his business. He kept himself occupied until the *Zuhr Salat* and then slept till the *Asr Salat*.

Yet Another Unique Incident In The Life Of Imam Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه

As was his wont, he went home one day after *Zuhr* to rest. He lived in an upper storey. He went there and lay down on his bed. Just then, someone knocked the door below. How very infuriating it is for one who has not slept in the night and has been working all day to be disturbed just as he lays himself to rest! But, the Imam got down the staircase and opened the door. He found a man standing there and asked him what he wanted. He wanted to ask a question. Now, this was not the time to ask questions. The Imam had set aside a time when men put their questions and got the reply, they solved their problems. However the Imam did not rebuke him but invited him to ask his question. He said, "What can I say? When I was coming here. I knew what I had to ask but I have forgotten it now. I

cannot remember it." Imam Abu Hanifa رحمة الله عليه said, "Well, you may ask me when you remember it." He did not tell him off, or scold him. Quietly, he returned upstairs to his quarters. He had just lied down when there was a second knock on the door. He came down again and opened the door to find the same man there. "What is it?" he asked and was told by that visitor, "I had remembered the question." "Go on, ask it." "O, I had remembered it until a short while ago but I forgot it again when you were half way down." Anyone else would have lost his temper but Imam Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه had sacrificed personal comfort and suppressed his ego. He said to him, "When you remember it, you may ask me." He went up stairs to his bed and prepared to sleep. The knock was heard a third time and he came down again to find the same man at the door. "I have recalled the question." The Imam said, "Go on, ask it." He said, "I wish to know if the faeces of man tastes sweet or sour?" (We seek the protection of Allah. What a question to ask?)

Limits of patience

It is difficult to say if any other man would have borne patiently so long but even if he had, this question would have thrown him into a rage. The Imam, however, was very cool and gave a polite answer, "If the human excretion is fresh then there is some sweetness in it but once it has dried up, it becomes sour to the taste." That man asked, "Have you learnt this after tasting it?" Imam Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه said, "You cannot know everything by taste alone. You can know something by intelligence and by seeing that flies infest fresh excretion. That shows that there is a difference in the two otherwise flies would sit on both."

Forbearing Man Of His Times

On hearing Imam Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه give this answer, that man said, "Imam Abu Hanifah, I apologise to you. I have troubled you too much. You have defeated me, nevertheless." The Imam asked him how was it that he was defeated? He said, My friend and I had argued about the most clement man among the Ulama. I said that Sufyan Thauri رحمة الله عليه was the most patient of the Ulama who does not get angry at all. But my friend said that Imam Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه was the most patient who never was angry. Then we decided upon this method to try you and to incite you. I decided to provoke you when it was time for you to rest and get you up and down a few times before putting to you a nonsensical question. If you had flown into a rage. I would have won but, as it is, I lost to my friend because I could not irritate you. You defeated me. And it is a fact that there is no one besides you as forbearing as you are and one who does not get angry at all."

This shows what the station of Imam Abu Hanifah رحمته الله عليه was. Why should the Angels not envy him? He had given up personal desires completely.

Forbearance Adorns

This is a prayer of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

اَللّٰهُمَّ اغْنِنِيْ بِالْعِلْمِ وَزَيِّنِي بِالْحِلْمِ (كنزالعمال حديث نمبر ٣٦٦٣)

"O Allah enrich me with knowledge and adorn me with forbearance." (Kanz ul-Ummal, *Hadith* # 3663)

It means decorate me with dignity. If a man possesses knowledge but is not forbearing or patient then in spite of knowledge he lacks polish and beauty.

The first step in walking this path and chaining one's

soul is to restrain anger. That is why the Prophet ﷺ said, "Do not be angry" لا تغضب. That in itself is the first lesson and a brief advice and also a way to save oneself from the wrath of Allah.

Ways to Control Anger

It is not that we are just told that we must not be angry. We are also shown how to do that. The Qur'an has also shown us how, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ has also shown us the method. The first thing we must know is that we are not called to account for involuntary and unintentional anger when one is excited suddenly. This is because it is not within one's control but the excitement and commotion that is aroused should not be allowed to influence one's actions. For instance, there is no sin if one loses his temper on someone and feels aroused but if he scolds him or hits him or abuses him because of the anger then he will be liable to answer for that and it will be a sin.

Recite The *Ta'awuz* When Angry

So, when you face such a situation and are excited, the first thing you must do is act a on the direction that Allah has given in the Qur'an:

وَإِمَّا يَنْزَغَنَّكَ مِنَ الشَّيْطٰنِ نَزْغٌ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللّٰهِ ۚ إِنَّهُ سَمِيْعٌ عَلِيْمٌ (الاعراف: ٢٠٠)

If a provocation from Satan provokes you (O Prophet), then seek refuge in Allah. (al-A'raf. 7:200)

That is, recite شيطان الرجيم (I seek refuge in Allah from the cursed devil). The devil provoked you but you sought the refuge of Allah, so Allah will preserve you from its evil consequences. Therefore, make it a habit to recite

these words whenever you are faced with such a situation. It is not difficult and only needs a little practice.

When Angry Sit Down Or Lie Down

The next thing that you must do when angry is follow the advice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It is an unusual but psychological procedure. He said, "If you feel the rage of anger in you then if you are standing, sit down. If the feeling persists in that posture then lie down." It is the peculiarity of anger that it rises to the brains and when it is at its peak a man stands up. Thus if a man is lying down and he gets angry, he will sit down, if he is sitting at that time then he will stand up. So, to subside anger, you must behave the other way about. If you are standing you must sit down and if you are sitting down then you must lie down and you take yourself to a lower position. The Holy Prophet ﷺ showed us this method because he knew that we might get into much difficulty because of anger. (Abu Dawood, Kitab ul-Adab باب مايقال عند الغضب)

When Angry Think Of The Powers Of Allah

Yet another method to fight anger is to say to oneself, "Suppose Allah were to be angry at me in the same way as I am angry at this man then what will become of me." We are told by a *Hadith* that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ once came across Abu Bakr رضی الله عنه scolding his slave. He was blaming him harshly. According to a version, the Prophet ﷺ said to him, لله اقدرعليك منك عليه "Remember, Allah has more power and authority over you than you have over him. You use your authority to hurt him but Allah has more authority over you."

Forbearance of Allah

We must look at Allah, how very clement and forbearing He is! His slaves disobey Him. They disbelieve in Him and they associate partners with Him. They go to the extent of denying His existence. In spite of that he lets them have their provision. Rather, He lets some of the disobedient slaves have abundant worldly wealth. There is no limit to His clemency. It is said, تخلقوا باخلاق الله "Grow the manners of Allah in yourself." You must think, "when Allah does not lose His temper on His slaves and not on me too, then why should I use it on my subordinates."

Hazrat Abu Bakr رضی الله عنه Scolds His Slave

Another version tells us that when the Holy Prophet ﷺ saw Abu Bakr رضی الله عنه scold his slave harshly, he told him:

لَعَّانِيْنَ وَصِدِّيْقِيْنَ كَلَّا وَرَبِّ الْكَعْبَةِ

"By the Lord of the Ka'bah, it cannot be that you curse while you are truthful, too!"

Your status is of the Siddiq. This thing does not behove a Siddiq. In this way, he forbids him to scold a slave. Thus, when you get angry on someone you must remember that the power and authority Allah has over you is much greater than the power and authority you have over your slave. "If Allah calls me to account, I will be nowhere." These are some of the ways to restrain anger that the Qur'an and the Prophet of Allah ﷺ have shown us.

Hold back Anger In The First Instance

In the beginning when man takes the first step in reforming himself, he must not see into the justification of anything whether he is justified in showing anger or not.

Sometimes, a man's behaviour calls for anger to be shown to him but a novice who is in his first steps to reformation must not differentiate between the two situations and he must repress his anger. Once he has full control over anger then he will be discreet in showing anger and will always use it at the proper time. However, as we have said, a man must not show anger at the initial stages when he learns to control it even if he knows that the situation calls for it, then he will not exceed the limits when he is angry.

Reasonable Anger

Sometimes, it is necessary to deal with a situation in anger. This is necessary when a teacher copes with his students, a father with his children, a mentor with his disciples, but the limits must not be exceeded. One must scold only as much as is necessary. If one scolds more than is needed then one's own ego plays its part and it is a sinful act besides blessings.

Varying Temperament of Holy Men

Most of the *awliya* (the friends of Allah, the saints) treat their disciples with compassion and love. They do not get angry at them. But, it is not the same with all of them. These men of Allah vary in their temperament. Some are very merciful and show mercy and compassion in reforming their disciples. Some others are quick tempered and they reform their disciples with their wrath over which they have control and of which they use proper doses for treatment of their disciples, when people refer to a holy man as awe inspiring and wrathful, it does not mean that he is always in a rage, scolding every now and then but it means that he uses his anger according to the dose required to reform his disciple. For instance, it is

known of Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanavi رحمة الله عليه that he was a temperamental man and he was a *Faruqi* that is a descendant of Hazrat Umar Faruq رضي الله عنه and, therefore, had a great sense of honour. However, he never exceeded the limits in being angry at his disciples. In normal circumstances, he was very clement and tolerant.

Do Not Scold When Angry

He used to say, "I advise other people and I also behave accordingly that I do show anger to one who is under my training but I am never angry at anyone who is not under my training. When you are angry and excited, do not scold anyone. At such times, keep quiet but when your anger has subsided, pretend to be angry and scold the delinquent. You will not then exceed the limits but you will exceed limits if you show anger when excited." He used to say, "By the grace of Allah, even when I punish someone to reform him, I remember at the time that he is at a higher level than I and more excellent. I punish him because I am duty bound to do so for Allah." He then compared it to a King's treatment of his son. It is like a king who is angry at his prince for doing something unreasonable so he asks his executioner to whip him. That man will obey the king and whip the prince but while whipping him he will be aware that his victim is a prince. So, I am the executioner and the other man is of a rank higher than I, I am helpless because of the duty imposed on me." He then continued, "Right at the time I treat my disciple I am aware that his rank is higher, but I am compelled to scold him because of the duty imposed on me by Allah."

Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه used to explain his behaviour, "On the one hand, I called for his explanation

and examined him but on the other I would pray to Allah inwardly that He may not do the same thing to me in the Hereafter. And, as I scold him here, O Allah, do not do that to me on the Day of Resurrection. Whatever I do, O Allah, I do in pursuance of Your command."

So, Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه showed anger only when training his disciples and observed the etiquettes minutely not exceeding the limits. What is commonly known among people about his wrathful nature is without foundation.

An Incident In The Life Of Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه

Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه had an old servant with him, Bhai Niaz, He lived with him in the *Khanqah* at Thana Bhaun. He was with Maulana for a long time and was thus somewhat spoiled and touchy. Someone once complained to Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه that Niaz was very short tempered and often scolded his guests. The Maulana was worried about it because this was not a correct way to behave with visitors. So, he summoned him and said to him, "Niaz! What is it that I hear! You are rude to every visitor." Suddenly, Niaz erupted, "Maulana! Don't lie, fear Allah!" What he really wished to say was that those who have complained about him should not lie but fear Allah and what he said to the Maulana was not meant to refer to him. The words, however were addressed to the Maulana, his master, and he was his servant telling him not to lie but to fear Allah on that account. By our standards that servant was liable to further censure and punishment but Maualana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه lowered his gaze and saying *astaghfirullah*, *astagahfirullah* went away from there. (I seek the forgiveness of Allah).

The truth was that the Maulana realised that he had only heard the complainant's version and scolded Niaz without getting his side of the story. He said, "It was my mistake. I should have found out what he had to say. Therefore, I sought the forgiveness of Allah and walked out from there." It is about this man that it is circulated that he was quick-tempered and scolded other people.

Certain Things Must Be Considered Before Telling Off Others

My respected father, Maulana Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه used to say, "We found with Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه nothing but compassion and love. When he found it necessary to reprimand someone as part of reforming him then he kept in mind certain considerations before giving him a piece of his mind. If anyone has to be scolded and he is young then he must consider some thing. For example, he must not aim to take out his steam but his aim should be to reform the other man. Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه described the method for that "Do not take any step when you are excited or in a rage. When you have cooled down, think over what you must do then pretend to be angry and give the man a scolding to the extent it is necessary, not less than that and not more. If you scold him while you are excited then you will lose control and commit excess."

The Proper Time To Show Anger

What is the proper time to show anger? The first and most correct time to show anger is when Allah is being disobeyed and sin is being committed. You must hate these things and you must show only that much anger as is necessary to eradicate the evil things. This is the first place to be angry.

Four Signs Of Perfect Faith

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ is quoted in a *Hadith*:

مَنْ اَعْطٰى لِلّٰهِ وَمَنَعَ لِلّٰهِ وَاَحَبَّ لِلّٰهِ وَ اَبْغَضَ لِلّٰهِ فَقَدِ اسْتَكْمَلَ اِيْمَانَهٗ

(ترمذی، ابواب صفة القیامة، باب نمبر ٦١)

"He who gives, gives for Allah, and he who denies, denies for Allah, and he who loves, loves for Allah, and he who hates, hates for Allah, then surely his faith is perfect." (Tirmizi, Chapter Signs of Qiyamah No. 61)

The Prophet ﷺ testified that the faith of such a man is perfect.

The First Sign

The Holy Prophet ﷺ showed us four things in this *Hadith* as signs of a perfect faith. The first sign is that when anyone gives something to someone else then whatever he gives, he gives for the sake of Allah. It means that a man always has this in mind that when he spends on a pious cause, he spends for Allah. Again, he spends for the sake of Allah when he spends on himself or his family, or in charity. He has the pleasure of Allah in mind. When he gives *sadaqah* or in charity, he should tell himself, "I give the *sadaqah* that Allah may be pleased with me and may reward me thorough His beneficence." He should never aim to make a display of his charity or to earn fame.

The Second Sign

The second sign is منع لله. "If he denies, it is for Allah. "If a man stops someone, he has the pleasure of Allah in mind. For instance, if he prevents spending money, he does so because Allah and His Messenger ﷺ have said, "Do not spend unnecessarily." So, he must tell himself that he saves

the money for the sake of Allah. This is also a sign of faith.

The Third And The Fourth Signs

The third sign is وأحب لله, "He loves for the sake of Allah." Thus, if a man loves a holy man, his love is not to fetch worldly gains but to progress in faith and gain advantage in religious knowledge and practice and so to please Allah. This love is for Allah alone and is a sign of faith. In this way, he always loves for Allah Whose pleasure he seeks.

The fourth sign is وأبغض لله, "if he hates or scolds anyone, he should do it for the sake of Allah." A man scolds another, or hates him, it is not against this person but it is for the wrong he does and for his behaviour that displeases Allah; in such cases, his action is for the sake of Allah, and is proper.

Do Not Hate The Person

Our religious mentors have told us something that we must remember. The hatred or the animosity that we bear must be against the disbelief but not against the unbeliever himself, against a sin but not the sinner and against immorality but not the immoral person. The subject of our anger is the immorality or the sin not the person involved in it because he is worth having mercy on, he is sick. He is ill with disbelief or with immorality. Our hatred is with the illness not the ill or sick because if we come to dislike the ill then who will treat him: this is why if he refrains from disbelief and immorality, he is entitled to be embraced because we have no quarrel with him and no argument.

The Method Of The Holy Prophet ﷺ

Let us see at the behaviour of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Hazrat Hamzah رضی الله عنه was his beloved paternal uncle. He was martyred in the Battle of Uhud and his body mistreated. Wahshi killed him and Hindah had eaten the martyr's liver but when both of them embraced Islam, they became the Prophet's ﷺ brother and sister in Islam and when their names are called out Muslims say رضی الله عنه or رضی الله عنها (May Allah be pleased with him, or her). No malice was borne with their persons but their behaviour and their belief were detestable. When their behaviour improved and their belief was corrected there remained nothing in them to loath.

An Incident In the Life Of Khwajah Nizam ud-din Auliya رحمة الله عليه

Khwajah Nizam ud-din Auliya رحمة الله عليه enjoys a high station among the saints. In his times, lived an eminent scholar and jurist, Maulana Hakim Ziauddin رحمة الله عليه. The one was a well-known Sufi while the other was a well-known scholar and jurist. Khwajah Nizam ud-din Auliya رحمة الله عليه considered *sama* to be persmissible. Many Sufis observed it. *Sama* is to recite poetry of *hamd* or *na't* (praise of Alllah or His Messenger) without the accompaniment of a musical instrument in a melodious voice or in a nice sgtraightforward prose reading while the audience listen to it religiously with love. Some Sufis allow it but most of the juirists disallow it calling it *bid'a* (an innovative practice). So, Maulana Hakim Ziauddin رحمة الله عليه was also one of those who disallowed it and, as we have seen, it was in the times of Khwajah Nizamuddin Auliya رحمة الله عليه. The former issued a *fatwa* (a religous legal opinion) against it while the latter listened to it.

When Maualana Hakim Ziauddin رحمة الله عليه. was on his

death bed, Khwajah Nizamuddin Auliya رحمة الله عليه went to see him. He asked someone to inform the Maualana that he had come to see him. The Maulana sent the messenger back with instructions to stop him from coming to him, saying, "I don't wish to see a perpetrator of *bid'a.* while I am dying." Khwajah Nizamuddin Auliya رحمة الله عليه sent the message that the perpetrator of *bid'a* had come to repent from *bid'a.* Maulana Hakim Ziayuddin رحمة الله عليه immediately sent his turban with instructions that it should be laid down and Khwajah Nizamuddin Auliya رحمة الله عليه be asked to walk on it to him with his shoes on. "He should not remove his shoes". Khwaja Nizamuddin Auliya رحمة الله عليه picked up the turban and placed it on his head saying it was an honour awarded to him. He went inside with that grace, shook hands with the Maulana and sat down next to him. He turned in attention to Maulana Hakim Zia ud-ddin رحمة الله عليه who died soon after in his presence. The Khwaja commented, "Praise be to Allah! Allah has granted approval to Hakim Ziauddin رحمة الله عليه who died while progressing in ranks."

We have seen that he was not prepared to meet him but after a moment only, he sent his turban to walk on!

Anger Must Be Shown For The Sake Of Allah

Anger that is for the sake of Allah does not ever create personal enmity, hostility or mischief because the one who is shown anger or hostility knows that it is not against his person but against his behaviour. People do not mind it because they know what he says is for the sake of Allah. He is the one who qualifies for the saying:

مَنْ اَحَبَّ لِلّٰهِ وَاَبْغَضَ لِلّٰهِ

"He who loves, loves for Allah and who despises, despises for Allah."

That is the right time to show anger provided it is within limits set by *shari'ah*. May Allah bestow on us His favour whereby we love anyone for His sake and hate anyone for His sake.

Anger should be properly chained. One should be angry when it is for the cause of Allah but one should pull the chain when it is wrong to be angry.

An Incident Of Hazrat Ali رضی الله عنه

A Jew spoke derogatory words about the Holy Prophet ﷺ in the presence of Hazrat Ali رضی الله عنه who was not one to let him go unpunished for that. He got hold of him at that very instant, raised him high and dropped him to the ground and sat down on his chest. The Jew finding himself no match for Hazrat Ali رضی الله عنه spat on his face, but the latter let go of his hold on the Jew and came down from his chest. When someone asked him why he set the Jew free while he had continued to be disrespectful and should have been punished, he said, "The first time I attacked him was for the love of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ because he had been disrespectful to him. When he spat on me, I became more angry and if I had revenged myself that would not have been for the Prophet ﷺ but for my own self because he had spat on my face. If I had hit him any more that would not have been for the sake of Allah, so I allowed him to go." In fact, this was the *Hadith:*

مَنْ اَحَبَّ لِلّٰهِ وَاَبْغَضَ لِلّٰهِ

"He who loves, loves for Allah and he who hates, hates for Allah."

Put into practice. In other words, a chain is tied to anger so that one is angry only when it is allowed by *shari'ah,* otherwise the chain is held tight. One should

refrain from being angry and show that he has nothing to do with anger. It is about these very people that it has been said كَانَ وقّافًا عِنْدَحُدُوْدِ اللهِ "They are the ones to stop within the limits of Allah."

An Incident In the Life Of Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ

One day, as he entered the Masjid Nabavi, Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ observed a conduit on the house of the Prophet's ﷺ uncle, Hazrat Abbas رضی اللہ عنہ directed over the Masjid Nabavi. Rain water etc. dropped into the mosque from it because its direction was over the mosque. He concluded that the mosque was the House of Allah and a conduit from any private house should not fall over it. So he ordered that the conduit be removed and that was done. He had ordered the removal because he was angry that the etiquettes of the mosque were flouted. Hazrat Abbas رضی اللہ عنہ learnt that the conduit was removed so he appreached Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ to know why it was done. He told Hazrat Abbas رضی اللہ عنہ that it was removed because it brought water into the mosque that was not anyone's personal property and it was in violation of the rules of *shari'ah*. Hazrat Abbas رضی اللہ عنہ informed that it was there from the times of the Prophet ﷺ whose permission was obtained before fixing it. "You should have known that and you had no authority to remove it". Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ asked him, "Did you have the permission of the Prophet ﷺ for that?" Hazrat Albbas رضی اللہ عنہ confirmed that he had the Prophet's ﷺ permission for that. Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ said to Hazrat Abbas رضی اللہ عنہ, "Come with me for God's sake!" So, they went where the conduit was and Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ bent down in the posture of *Ruku'* and asked Hazrat Abbas رضی اللہ عنہ to stand on his back and refix the conduit. Hazrat Abbas رضی

رضی اللہ عنہ said, "I will get someone else to fix it. "Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ said, "How can Umar dare remove the conduit allowed by Muhammad ﷺ. I have committed a great crime. The minimum punishment I should get for it is that I bend down and you stand over my back to fix the conduit." So, Hazrat Abbas رضی اللہ عنہ stood on his back and fixed the conduit back at its original place. That conduit still stands in the Masjid Nabavi, May Allah reward those people who have built the Masjid Nabavi, they have retained the conduit at its original place although it has no utility now. It only remains as a memory-refresher. It is an example of putting into practice the *Hadith* مَنْ اَحَبَّ لِلّٰهِ وَاَبْغَضَ لِلّٰهِ {He who loves, loves for Allah. and he who hates, hates for Allah}. The anger that Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ displayed the first time was for the sake of Allah. Then the love that he displayed was again for Allah. He who behaves in this manner, perfects his faith because this is a sign of a perfect faith.

Pretend To Be Angry & Scold

As we have seen, sometimes it becomes necessary to show anger for the sake of Allah. This is more true when dealing with those who are under one's care as a teacher with his students, a father with his children, a Shaikh with his disciples. However, one must not fly into a rage going beyond what is necessary to correct one's word. We have seen earlier that a man must not scold when he is excited and angry. If a teacher gets angry over his student and gets excited as a result then he must not scold the student or beat him as long as he is angry and worked up. When his anger has subsided and he has cooled down then he must create a pretended anger and scold him so that he does not go beyond the limits. 'This procedure is somewhat difficult because a man generally goes out of control when

angry. So,unless he practices this behaviour, he will not get rid of the disadvantages and evils of anger.

Consequences Of Excess On Subordinates

If one exceeds the limits in showing anger to those in one's care, like children, students and disciples, then sometimes the consequences are very detrimental. If it were an elder or equal whom one scolds and rebukes beyond limits, he would not hesitate to show his displeasure and may even seek vengeance. He may tell him that he did not approve of his behaviour. But, junior person will not say so. He will not even seek vengeance because he is not able to do that. A son will not tell his father, a student his teacher or a disciple his mentor that he had been too rude to him. The result is no one will know how much he was hurt by the excess they had committed. When it is not known, how can anyone ask to be pardoned. 'This is a very delicate matter. Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه has said particularly about teachers who teach young children that their case is verty sensitive because they are minor. It is with the minors that even if they forgive, the pardon is not valid. When a minor forgives it is not authentic because he is not authorised.

Summary

The summary of what has been written so far is that we must try to suppress our anger. If we do not do that we must realise that anger is the root cause of many ills and gives rise to innumerable evils. When trying to suppress anger, we must begin by curbing the tendency whenever we feel the urge. Once we have it under control then we may use it discreetly and express anger only when it is permitted by *shari'ah* but then again within prescribed limits.

The Wrong Use Of Anger

We have seen the *Hadith* tell us بُغض فی اللہ "Express anger for the sake of Allah. Some people use it in a very wrong manner. Although they declare that they show anger for the sake of Allah, their anger is for their personal ends, to serve their pride or to lower the other man in the sight of people. For instance, if anyone is favoured by Allah. and he becomes religious and takes part in some religious exercises he considers every other person below him. He goes so far as to belittle his father, his mother, his brother, his sister, every member of his family. He looks down upon them and regards them as destined to Hell while he is worthy of Paradise. He takes it upon himself the responsibility of reforming the other people so he rebukes them and scolds them and refers to them in derogatory terms. He debases the other people and begins to usurp their rights. Then the devil teaches him that whatever he does is in terms of hatred *for the sake of Allah* while actually he may be doing that for his personal ends.

These people are raw on the path of Allah. The devil tempts them that they should deal with the other people in terms of the *Hadith* بغض فی اللہ (Hatred for Allah) and gets them to despise the other Muslims. As a consequence, they quarrel with them and never see eye to eye with one another. They get angry on flimsy grounds and they rebuke other people every now and then. The result is outright mischief

An expression of Allamah Shabbir Ahmad Usmani رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

One expression of Allamah Shabbir Ahmad Usmani رحمۃ اللہ علیہ is worth remembering for ever. He used to say, "If a true word is said with a sincere intention in a faithful

manner then it is never ineffectivce. It never gives rise to mischief and corruption." There are three conditions that he has stated. They are (i) the word is true, (ii) the intention is sincere and (iii) it is delivered in a faithful manner. For example, if someone does something evil then the reformer must pity him and try to advise him in a polite and mild manner so that he gives up the evil practice. This should be his intention and he must not seek personal fame and should not aim to debase the other man and his method should be faithful, that is he be soft-spoken and loving. If these three conditions are met then normally there is no mischief done. If you find that mischief has erupted after saying the true words then you must realise that one of the three conditions was not met either the words were untrue, or the intention was faulty or the method employed was incorrect.

You are Not Supervisors on Behalf of Allah

We must remember that we were not sent to the world as policemen of Allah. The work entrusted to us is only to convey to other people truth with a sincere intention in a faithful manner. We must go on doing this in a reasonable way. While we must not tire of doing it, we should not do any thing that gives rise to mischief and corruption.

May Allah have mercy on us and favour us and cause us to observe what we have read. *Aameen!*

And our concluding remark is that praise belongs to Allah Lord of the worlds.

و آخر و دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العلمين

Series: 80

THE BELIEVER IS A MIRROR

DARUL ISHAAT URDU BAZAR KARACHI

Venue : Jame'Masjid Baitul-Mukarram,
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi.

Date :

The Believer Is A Mirror

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهد ان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد !

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطن الرجيم بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

عن ابى هريرة رضى الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم

اَلْمُؤْمِنُ مِرْاٰةُ الْمُؤْمِنِ (ابو داؤد، كتاب الادب، باب فى النصيحة)

Praise belongs to Allah. We praise Him, ask Him for help and seek His forgiveness. And, we believe in Him and place our trust in Him. We seek His protection from the mischief of our souls and our evil deeds. He whom Allah guides, none can mislead and he whom He

leaves to stray none can guide. And we bear witness that there is none worthy of worship besides Allah, who is Alone and has no partner, and we bear witness that Sayyidina Muhammad is His Slave and Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family and companions, and may He bestow favour and peace, a complete peace and plenty of it.

Hazrat Abu Hurayrah رضی الله عنه has said that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "The Believer is the Believer's mirror."(Abu Dawood, Kitabul-Adab)

A Believer Is A Mirror For Another Believer

The *Hadith* reproduced above is very brief and it contains only three words (in Arabic). In spite of that it contains a world of knowledge for us. The apparent meaning of this *Hadith* is that a Believer is as a mirror which reflects the image of the man facing it. The man sees his countenance in the mirror which faithfully reflects its beauty and ugliness. Without the mirror a man cannot see his drawbacks, the ugly spots on his face. The mirror tells him that he must pay attention to his countenance and it needs cleaning. In the same way, a Believer is a mirror for another Believer. He tells him if he sees any shortcoming in him he removes it and reforms himself. Once the Second Believer learns from the first of any wrong in himself he sets himself to remove that wrong and corrects himself. This is what is meant by the *Hadith*: "A Believer is the mirror of another."

One Who Points Out Wrongs Is Truly A Well-Wisher

This *Hadith* is lesson-giving to both the Believers-the one who points out a drawback and the one to whom his shortcoming is pointed out.

The man to whom his mistake is pointed out should not feel offended by the one who points it out because the Holy Prophet ﷺ has compared a Believer with a mirror-a Believer is a mirror for another. If anyone stands before a mirror and it reflects the dirty spots on his face that he should clean then that man is not offended with the mirror for pointing out his deficiencies. Rather, he is pleased that the mirror afforded him an opportunity to remove the spots. In the same way, a Believer is a mirror for another Believer and if he tells the other that he has certain defects in him-whether in his observance of *Salat* or mutual dealings-then he shoud not get angry on him. Rather, he should be pleased that he has pointed out to him the dark spots and he must assure him that he would rectify his defects as far as possible.

Why Is Objection Raised On The Ulama Who Point Out A Mistake?

People often express anger at the Ulama because "they call every other person an unbeliever or a sinner. They issue an edict that so-and-so is an unbeliever, a sinner or a *bidati* (an innovator in religious matters). They spend their lives turning other people into disbelief." Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanavi رحمة الله عليه has given a reasonable reply to these people. He has said, "The Ulama do not make other people unbelievers but say that they are practicing disbelief." If anyone does an act of disbelief then actually he is the one to perpetrate it. It is then that the Ulama point out that his

behaviour smacks of disbelief in the same way as a mirror points out the dark spots on the face. The mirror does not put the spot on the face nor stains it. The Ulama merely tell us that a behaviour borders on disbelief, sin or *bida'h* so they cannot be blamed for the behaviour of a person just as a mirror cannot be blamed for the spots or stains on a face. The Ulama do not make anyone an unbeliever or a sinner. So we must not express anger at them for our defects. On the contrary, we must be grateful to them that by telling us of the wrong they enabled us to correct ourselves.

A Doctor Diagnoses, Does Not Give The Disease

We may take the case of a man who does not know the nature of the disease he is suffering from. He goes to a doctor for a treatment but is told that he is afflicted with a serious illness. Naturally, the doctor will not be blamed for causing the illness. The illness was there already but the patient was unaware of it and the doctor cautioned him by pointing it out so that he may now begin the treatment.

An Incident Worth Learning From

My respected father Maulana Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه narrated to us an incident concerning his father's-my grandfather's-illness. He lived in Deoband. There was a Hakim (a doctor of eastern medicine) in Delhi and he was blind and a very expert Hakim. He treated my grandfather. My father said, "I travelled to Delhi to relate the symptoms to the Hakim and get his medicine for my father. I went to his clinic and told him about my father and requested for the medicine. The Hakim was blind but when he heard me, he told me that he would give the medicine for my father later but first I must treat myself. I protested that I was not ill and was healthy but he insisted that I take my

medicine. He gave it to me and prescribed the doses for different times of the day. He told me to report how I was, when I returned after a week for my father's medicine. So, I got medicine for myself and my father and when I arrived home I told my father about it and how he had given me medicine for myself too. My father advised me to follow the directives of the Hakim and to take the medicine as prescribed. When I went to the Hakim again after a week I told him that I had not been able to understand why he gave me medicine and I could not find any illness in myself. The Hakim told me that he had heard me last week and feared that my lungs were infected and I might get tuberculosis so he gave me the medicne. He told me that by the Grace of Allah I was cured of the infection." The patient does not know his illness but the Hakim or doctor diagonises it for which the patient should be thankful to him. Thus, we will not say that the doctor brought about the illness; rather, he warned the patient on time so that he may treat himself but not take out his rage on the doctor.

We Must not show Anger to the Doctor.

However, there are different ways of pointing out the shortcommings. Someone gives a timely warning in a gentle and polite manner but someone else is careless in telling us about our faults. However, even if anyone is rough in giving us the warning, we must be grateful to him for pointing out our illness. There is an Arabic poetry meaning: "My greatest well-wisher is he who presents to me a gift of my defects, who tells me about them. As for him who praises me highly, exaggerating imagined qualities, he leads me to pride and arrogance. He seems to be great but he really hurts me. As for him who points out my defects, I must thank him. "The *Hadith*, nevertheless,

teaches us that we must not be angry at anyone who points out our defects but we must take it as an opportunity to correct ourselves.

The Person who Points out Mistakes Must not Curse

The second lesson the *Hadith* teaches us is that the person who points out to the other his mistakes or defects must not curse him. Again, he is compared to the mirror. The mirror reflects an image faithfully without adding or diminishing anything and without passing any comments. It does not curse the one whose image it reflects but it merely shows what it sees including any spot or stain. In the same way, the believing man must merely point out the stains and spots in characters, the defects and the shortcomings in behaviour without passing comments adverse or favourable. He does exaggerate but is faithful in reflecting what he sees. It is not a believer's task to curse or criticise or publish anyone's faults or to debase him. He is just a mirror and must say exactly what he finds and not blame or censure.

Pity Him who Errs

When a Believer tells another of his faults, he truly has pity on him for being involved in the mistake. It is just like the pity we show when one is ill. We do not show our anger. No one will scold him for being ill but everyone will pity him and advise him to get a treatment. Similarly, if a believer commits a mistake or a sin then he is entitled to be shown pity and not anger. He must be told politely and softly with a display of love that he suffers from a defect so that he may treat himself. No one should be angry at him and no one should curse him or blame him.

Do not Degrade Anyone who Commits A Mistake

We are not aware these days of our duty to caution a believer when he does something wrong. If a Muslim offers *Salat* in a wrong manner, it is our duty to show him the correct method because that is part of *commanding the approved and forbidding the disapproved.* It is obligatory on every Muslim. Today, no one cares to correct anyone. On the contrary, if they see anyone do a wrong they say to themselves that they must let him commit the mistake. However, there are some who are prompted to point out the error but then they behave like policemen of Allah so they reprimand and ridicule the wrong doer and they debase him on the face of other people. This is not in accordance with the Prophet's ﷺ advice *"you are a mirror"* do not curse or scold or debase anyone. Tell him in such a way that he is not hurt and understands you.

A Incident in the Lives of Imam Hasan and Imam Husain رضی اللہ عنہما

It is said that once both Hazrat Hasan رضی اللہ عنہ and Hazrat Husain رضی اللہ عنہما were walking along the banks of Euphrates when they saw an old man performing ablution at the shores of the river. He was not doing it correctly. They realised that it was their duty to correct him but he was older than them. How should they tell him? They did not wish to hurt him or he might feel offended. They thought of it and together went and sat near the man. They kept talking to each other and with him. They said, "you are older than us. When we perform ablution we are always in doubt whether we observed the *Sunnah* procedure or not. Therefore, we will perform ablution before you and you tell us if we err or omit a *Sunnah*." They both performed the ablution and afterwards asked him if they had correctly performed the

ablution. The old man had realised, meanwhile, that he had committed mistakes himself in performing the ablution and that the boys were right. He said, "The truth is that I had actually performed ablution in a wrong manner and have realised my mistake by seeing you do it. *Insha Allah*, I will now perform in a correct way. This is the approach the Qur'an wants us to adopt when it says:

أُدْعُ اِلٰى سَبِيْلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحِكْمَةِ (سورة النحل: ١٢٥)

(O Prophet) Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation.(An Nahl 16:125)

You are not appointed by Allah to act as strongman to force people with stern language and insulting words to correct them. You are a mirror. Just as a mirror gives only a faithful reflection and does not rebuke or scold so you too have to behave in like manner. This is a lesson we derive from the *Hadith*:

المؤمن مراة المؤمن

"The Believer is the Believer's mirror".

The Shortcoming of One Should Not Be told to Another

Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi رحمة الله عليه has commented on this *Hadith* in this manner. It is the characteristic of a mirror that it casts the reflection of the man who stands before it and the reflection goes to him alone. The mirror will not cast anyone's reflection to someone else. If he carries a stain or spot only he will see it and no one else. The mirror will not tell anyone else that such-and-such has these stains on his face. It will not publicise the defects. A believer is also a mirror. If he sees a defect in someone then he must tell him in private and quietly that he has that defect. It is not a believer's characteristic that he tells other

people of some one's defects. Such a behaviour is selfishness. If he is sincere in his intention that he reveals to a man his defects for the sake of Allah then he will not let anyone else know of it. If on the contrary, he is selfish and hopes to please himself, he will try to debase the man because of his defects. We must know that it is unlawful to insult and belittle a Muslim.

Our Ways of Life

If we look round at our society, we will find only a very few people who show goodwill in pointing out to a Muslim his shortcomings. Very few people today tell a Muslim that his behaviour is not upto the mark or against *Shari'ah*. Yet, we will find many who relate a Muslim's defects to other people with the result that they are guilty of backbiting, slander and falsehood. They also commit the sin of defaming a Muslim. The best method for such people is to tell the wrong-doer in private that he has that defect which he must correct. The *Hadith* under reference also teaches us that when we find a drawback in a Muslim we must not publicise it but tell only that man about it and none else.

Do not feel Disheartened After Pointing out A Mistake

The *Hadith* tells us that a mirror will tell the person facing it what defects it sees in him. If that man comes before it a second time, it will again tell him what is wrong with him. If he comes a third time, it will again point out to him his defects. But it will not pester him to remove his shortcomings. If that man does not remove his shortcomings, the mirror will not show displeasure or separate from him. It will not insist the man to remove his defects and it will not tell him that because he does not

correct himself it will not cast his reflection if he comes before it. Rather, the mirror will faithfully reflect his image as many times as the man appears before it. It will not cease giving the reflection and it will not express displeasure or take upon itself the role of a policeman and impose upon him its will.

The Method of the Prophets عليهم السلام

It was the approach of the Holy Prophets عليهم السلام that they never gave up and never separated from their people and never conceded defeat. Rather, whenever they got a chance they conveyed their message but never imposed themselves upon their people. The Qur'an says:

لَسْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِمُصَيْطِرٍ (سورة الغاشية: ٢٢)

You are not a warder over them. (al-Ghashia 88:22)

The Qur'an says "while you will not impose your will over them you are there only to convey the message". Tell him who errs, and caution him. After that, it is his duty to reform and correct himself. If he does not reform, you may tell him again but do not lose heart and become aloof. Tell him a third time but do not give up hope. The Prophet ﷺ was very much compassionate on his people so he lost heart when the unbelievers and idolaters rejected him. The following verse of the Qur'an consoled him.

لَعَلَّكَ بَاخِعٌ نَّفْسَكَ اَلَّا يَكُوْنُوْا مُؤْمِنِيْنَ (الشعراء:٣)

It may be that you (O Prophet) will kill yourself with grief, because they believe not (ash-Shuara. 26:3)

It is not your duty, the Qur'an tells the Prophet ﷺ to make them believe. Your task is merely to convey the message. It is not your responsibility that they believe.

Why Did You Do That?

My respected father Maulana Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه used to say that those who are engaged in propagation of Islam and in enjoining the right and forbidding the wrong must persevere in their efforts and never give up. They must not lose heart if people do not pay heed. They should not be angry at them and give up their effort because of the failure of the people to pay heed to them. They must ask themselves for whom they do the work. Is it not to please Allah? They must resolve to do it again and again for Allah. They may hope for reward each time they try. So, their effort is not in vain even if the people do not listen to them. It is not their direct concern whether people pay heed or not. It is Allah Who guides and Who keeps away guidance from anyone.

The Best Way To Reform Society

The truth is that Allah gives guidance to the defaulter when a Believer points out to him his fault sincerely and repeatedly and at the same time makes a supplication to Allah to help him. He supplicates Allah in these words: "O Allah, my brother is involved in sin. Do guide him. Show him the right path." If we persist in doing this work then it is something whose blessings will surround the atomophere around us and reform the society. My respected father used to say that it is an automatic self-working system that if a Believer keeps correcting another Believer observing these conditions and following these etiquettes then Allah will reform the society thereby.

Summary

This is a summary of our discussion on this *Hadith* a Believer is another Believer's mirror.

It is a Believer's task to remind again and again.

He should not lose heart and concede defeat if his reminders fail to draw a response.

If a Believer is sincere and keeps drawing attention to the wrong repeatedly then some day his efforts will surely bear fruit.

A Believer must play the part of a mirror. If another Believer acts as a mirror and points out to anyone his wrongs then he must not grieve or get angry at him for pointing out his mistakes.

May Allah grant us the urge to behave accordingly. *Aameen.*

And the concluding part of our remarks is that praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the worlds.

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Series: 81

TWO APPROACHES BOOK OF ALLAH - MEN OF ALLAH

DARUL ISHAAT URDU BAZAR KARACHI

Venue	:	Darul-Uloom Karachi.
Date	:	Shawwal 1990

Two Approaches
Book of Allah - Men of Allah

الحمدلله رب العلمين والصلوة والسلام على رسوله الكريم وعلى
آله اصحابه اجمعين

امابعد!

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطن الرجيم بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

لَقَدْ مَنَّ اللّٰهُ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ اِذْبَعَثَ فِيْهِمْ رَسُوْلاً مِّنْ اَنْفُسِهِمْ يَتْلُوْا عَلَيْهِمْ
اٰيٰتِهٖ وَيُزَكِّيْهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتٰبَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ (سورة آل عمران: ١٦٤)

Praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the worlds. And blessings and peace be on His Noble Messenger and his family and Companions, all of them.

I seek refuge in Allah from the cursed devil. In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, The Merciful.

Certainly Allah has conferred a favour on the Believers when He sent among them a Messenger

from themselves, who recites to them His revelations, and purifies them, and teaches them the Book and Wisdom... (Aal Imran, 3:164)

Two Approaches.

Allah launched a two-pronged approach for the guidance of humanity. One of them is through a sequence of His Books. The Books of Allah are His heavenly Books and include the Torah, the Zabur (Psalms), the Injeel (Bible) and, finally, the Qur'an:

وَاَنْزَلْنَـآ اِلَيْكَ الذِّكْرَ لِتُبَيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ مَا نُزِّلَ اِلَيْهِمْ وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُوْنَ (النحل: ٤٤)

And we have (now) revealed to you (O Prophet) the Admonition that you may make clear to mankind what has been revealed unto them, and that they may reflect. (an-Nahl, 16:44)

The second approach is through men of Allah. They are the Prophets عليهم السلام. These men of Allah were sent together with the Books of Allah so that they could explain the Books, give a practical training of its doctrines and expound its meaning by their sayings and behaviour.

Allah had said in the Holy Qur'an:

لَقَدْ مَنَّ اللّٰهُ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ اِذْبَعَثَ فِيْهِمْ رَسُوْلاً مِّنْ اَنْفُسِهِمْ يَتْلُوْا عَلَيْهِمْ اٰيٰتِهٖ وَيُزَكِّيْهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتٰبَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ (سورة آل عمران: ١٦٤)

Men of Allah are sent that they may expound the Book, explain it and train the people. The verse of the Qur'an quoted in the begining is about this topic itself:

The basic purpose of sending a Prophet to a people is to teach the Book of Allah because they are not capable by themselves of deriving gainful knowledge from the Book without the guidance and explanation of a teacher.

A perusal by itself without a teacher is not enough. And this does not apply to the Books of Allah alone. It is

the same with every science and art taught in the world. If anyone hopes to gain profitable knowledge and excellence in any subject by simply reading and studying the books on the subject he cannot do so unless he submits himself to the guidance of a teacher. He cannot become an expert in any field unless he learns from a teacher.

Will Populate The Graveyard

There are several books available on medical science. They may be had in different languages - Urdu, Arabic, Persian, English, etc. But, if anyone hopes to study them in the comfort of his home and attain proficiency in medicine, he is wrong. Suppose he is very intelligent and capable and he has tremendous grasping power, so he sits down to study from the books. He is also able to understand what the books say. What can he do after that? Will he treat people? He will send them to the graveyard if he does so. Even if he knows what is in the books and understands what they convey, he cannot be a doctor unless he has a teacher to train him. No government, anywhere in the world, will permit him to work as a doctor because he has not pursued the method necessary to adopt a medical profession. Allah has made man in such a way that unless a teacher teaches him and trains him he will not gain mastery over any science or art.

Difference Between Man & Animal

Allah has created man and animal with different charecteristics. The animals do not need a teacher or trainer as much as a man does. The young of a fish for instance, begin to swim immediately on birth. As the eggs hatch, no one teaches the young how to swim and they do not need a teacher for that. They are created with inborn instincts that tell them how.

If a man takes the example of a fish and throws his new-born baby into the water hoping that it would swim by instinct like the young of the fish, then this man is mad. There is a vast difference between a man's child and the young of a fish. Allah has fashioned the latter in a way that it does not need a teacher while the former - the man's young - needs a tutor to teach him to swim.

Take the new-born chick, the moment it hatches out of the eggs, it nibbles at food without being taught but a human baby will not eat unless taught. It needs a teacher.

Allah has fashioned man so that he needs to be taught. He cannot do anything in the world without a teacher and so cannot learn a science or technique or craft.

Make A Cupboard From A Book

Look at a carpenter! If there is a book that instructs how to build a table or chair, it also says what tools are required. Can anyone read the book and follow its directions to carve out a cupboard? He will never do it. But, if a man does not read any book but keeps in the company of a carpenter for a few months watching him all the while how he uses his tools then he will soon build a cupboard by himself.

One Cannot Cook Food By Reading Books

There are several cook books available. They tell us how different items of food may be cooked. They tell us what ingredients to use and in what proportion. The books have everything in them. If a man who has never cooked anything sets about to cook some kind of food, he will never do it unless he is taught by an expert cook.

Man Goes By Practical Example

So, it is the nature of man that he cannot acquire knowledge merely from books unless he has a teacher and mentor to train him. He needs to live in the company of the teacher and mentor. It applies to every science, art and craft. The same pattern and procedure governs religious studies. If anyone attempts to acquire religious knowledge merely through books then he will never succeed. He needs to have a solid base in the company of a teacher and mentor and to have studied his life to be able to understand religious philosophy.

Just The Book Alone Was Not revealed

This is the secret behind a Book of Allah never being revealed without a Prophet to explain it. There are cases of Prophets عليهم السلام who had no Book revealed to them by Allah but there is not a single case of a Book of Allah descending on mankind without a Prophet carrying it. Why is it so?

This is because a Book by itself would not have been understood by man who does not possess enough capability to reform himself by that. Of course, it was not difficult for Allah to send the Book by itself. The idolators also made similar demands:

لَوْ لَا نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ الْقُرْآنُ جُمْلَةً وَاحِدَةً (الفرقان: ٣٢)

Why has not the Qur'an been sent down on him all at once? (al-Furqan. 25:32)

Was it difficult for Allah to have the Book before every man when he woke up in the morning? A beautiful, well-bound Qur'an could have been placed at the head of every bed. A voice from the heavens would have decalred, "This is the Book. Obey what it says." It was not difficult for Allah to do so. But, He did not do it. He did not send a Book by itself. He sent the teacher along too, to impart

training Why was that?

Two Lights Help In Reading The Book

This is because a Book cannot be understood unless accompanied by the light of a Messenger's teachings. The Book is very eloquent and perfect but I sit in darkness, I have no light with me. Can I then benefit from it? No! Not until I have two lights. First, I have to have with me the light of the eyes and secondly, I must have the light of the sun or an artificial electric light. If even one of these lights is missing then I cannot derive benefit from the Book. There may be sunlight but my eyes may lack radiance, then how will I read the Book?

Or, if my eyes have the light but there is no outward light of the sun or the bulb, then too I will not be able to take advantage of the Book. To read the Book I must have both lights - a light within me and a light outside me. It is an inward light and an outward light. When both the lights are available only then can one benefit from the Book. Therefore, Allah let us have two opportunities-the Book of Allah and the Men of Allah.

The Slogan *The Book of Allah Suffices us*

This is where man wavers and goes into the labyrinth of error. so, a sect arose and said about itself:

حَسْبُنَا كِتَابُ اللهِ

It is a very appealing slogan: *The Book of Allah suffices us*. On the face of it this is a very good thing to say. The Book of Allah Tells Us of Everything. تِبْيَانًا لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ

But, let someone ask him who raises this slogan that if he has a book of medicine at home and the book says all one wishes to know about medicine but the light of the teacher is

not there is not then the book of no use? Then why pick up the Book of Allah and say "We are not in need of a Messenger's training?" This is nothing but blindness and decption.

So, there is a group of men who embraced the Book of Allah but kept away from the men of Allah, the Prophets عليهم السلام. They went down the labyrinth of error. Actually, if the men of Allah are overlooked, it is like overlooking the Book of Allah because the Book itself says, "Look at Our Men whom We have sent as your teachers. We have sent them as our Prophets." Now, if anyone says that he holds the Book and does not need the men then he actually casts aside the Book. The books of medicine say: "administer medicine as directed by the physician." Then, what will happen if anyone forgets this directive but takes medicine according to his own whims claiming to have knowledge of the books? He will hasten his death. Exactly the same thing is done by those who raise the slogan. حسبنا كتاب الله The Book of Allah sufficies us. They incite people against the men of Allah.

The Men Alone Too Are not Enough

There is another group of men who sought the men of Allah to such an extent that they neglected the Book of Allah. They say that they are satisfied with the Men of Allah alone and they do not know what the Book of Allah is. Thus, they picked up the Men who they thought were enough for their thinking and they came to adore them. They paid no heed to what the Book said but decided to go along with the Men. They are also on a wrong path.

The Middle Course

The reasonable course is to hold the Book of Allah and the Men of Allah in conjunction with each other. The

Book of Allah must be read in the light of the teachings of the Men of Allah. It is then that we will receive guidance. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said about holding both these things:

مَا اَنَا عَلَيْهِ وَاَصْحَابِیْ

"What I am on (that is the Book) and my Companions."

That is, the Book and the Men, The Book of Allah is what the Prophet ﷺ was on, and the Companions are the Men of Allah, and we are asked to hold to both of them. Anyone, who follows both these at the same time, will be on guidance. If we understand this then there will be an end to error and possibility of going astray whether technically, ideologically or practically. Many people have studied books and upgraded themselves as religious guides and leaders. They have studied books So they bracket themselves with Imam Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه and call out:

هُمْ رِجَالٌ وَنَحْنُ رِجَالٌ

"They are Men of Allah so are we men (of Allah)." (We will do what they have done.)

They raise themselves at par with the real Men of Allah. Just as they observed *Ijtihad* to answer a problem through Qur'an and *Hadith*, these men also appropriate the authority to themselves to observe *Ijtihad*. These men are misled. It is just like a raw medical student comparing himself to a surgeon and appropriating to himself the right to operate patients, saying هم رجال They are Men so I am also a Man!" Those people who raise this slogan هم رجال (They are Men so are we) after reading books on religion without going through a teaher's eyes, are people of the third type on error.

Let us suppose a man has studied medical books and

learns from them the different medicines for different illnesses. He opens up a clinic and preseribes medicine to his patients. Let us also suppose that his initial patients recover and he becomes famous. People throng his clinic without knowing that even one patient could be administered wrong medicine and die. So, it is foolish to visit an uneducated quack just because his prescriptions seem to bring relief. There is always the possibility of someone suffering adversely.

In the same vein we often hear people say, "many people became religious after reading a certain book although they were irreligious before that. They never offered *Salat* or remembered Allah before but have come to do that after reading the book. The author is a great man. The Ulama tell us unnecessairly that we must not follow him and not read his books. But, we have met him and read his books. We have benefitted much." It is the same with this author as with the quack. If he could cure a few people it does not qualify him as a doctor. He can err any time and cause a terrible loss. In the same way this man who appropriates to himself the task of a religious teacher or mentor just by studying books should not be allowed to cheat Muslims.At any time he will present a theory that will mislead the layman.

How did the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم learn the Religion

Allah has said about this religion that it will go down from one to another, generation to generation. It does not progress by just reading the books with the eye. It is transferred to the student's heart from the teacher's heart. Did the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم read any book? Did they obtain a degree? Did they get a certificate? They did nothing of the sort but studied at *Sufah,* for instance, where they had

no syllabus and no fixed periods of classes.

What did they do at *Sufah*? They studied the behaviour of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. They examined his deeds and actions, and what he said. They obtained the light of the teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The same method was adopbed by successors of the Companions and the epigones after them, and so it goes on to this day.

We read in the *Hadith* books:

قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا فُلاَنٌ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا فُلاَنٌ

He said that:

So-and-so narrated that so-and-so narrated to him....is the line of transmission of a *Hadith*, a pure chain that connects us directly to the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

Grants Through A Means

There are two ways of studying a book. You read it yourself with the aid of a dictionary from which you get meanings of difficult words. Or, you read it under the eyes of a teacher. There is an ocean of a difference between the two methods. It may be that the reader understood the same thing what the teacher explained but when a teacher says something it is like a light and that light brings blessings and radiance of the knowledge from Allah. This is never received from direct reading of the book. The teacher is nothing and has no reality and it is only Allah Who grants - but, He gives through a *means* (not directly). The question arises : Can Allah not grant directly? Could He not reveal to the Prophet ﷺ without a *means?* But, He did not do it and He made Jibril (gabrial) عليه السلام the *means.* Even when He spoke to Hazrat Musa عليه السلام, He did it through the *means* of a tree, the *Tur.* What is the wisdom behind it? Only Allah knows that, but it is His practice

that He gives through a *means*. The *means* could be a living person or a lifeless thing, like the tree. He wished to display His Self then he did it via the Mount *Tur* although it has no standing otherwise. In the same way a teacher has no standing if he is not made a *means*. This is the practice of Allah. He showed us how He gives and if anyone wants to take it, he may take it in the manner He gives. If we look at a window that lets in sunlight, will we say that the window creates the light? The light comes from another source and the window is only the *means* of letting it in. In the same way, a teacher is a *means* and his person has no say in giving the light of knowledge yet he is helpful to us in conveying this light. This is why a teacher is respected and honoured. Allah has made him a *means* for us.

The gist of what has been said is that although the Book of Allah ranks first and *Hadith* follows it as second yet from the point of view of observance the sequence is to pass forward through *Hadith* to arrive at the Book of Allah. Without *Hadith*, we canot comprehend the Book of Allah. Therefore, knowledge of *Hadith* is the root of every other Science and learning.

May Allah inspire us to learn and teach sincerely and make us observe all etiquettes in our study. *Aameen!*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين